

# Memories of Early Rangiora

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*The author, Charles Ivory Jennings (1860 – 1947), was a prominent and well-known person who twice served as Mayor.*

## Part I.

THE first meeting of the Rangiora Borough Council was held on June 24, 1878, consequently in June next year the Diamond Jubilee of the Borough will be celebrated. No doubt the later generations of the inhabitants of the town will be curious to know what the chief business portion of the town was like in pre-borough days. My memory carries me back to the time when roads were in their native state except for a line of rough riverbed shingle along the centre. On either side, of the shingle there were giant tussocks through which pedestrians had to find their way. It can be imagined what the conditions were like in wet weather, and that it was almost out of the question for women to get about the roads. At that time the roading of the county was a duty that devolved upon the Provincial Council formed in 1853, the cost being met out of the revenue from land sales. The time came, however, when provision had to be made for the institution of Road Boards to undertake the maintenance of the arterial roads, and formation of secondary roads to give access to the settlers' holdings.

A Primitive Election. It was not till 1864 that steps were taken to introduce local government in the Rangiora District. On January 26 of that year at a meeting held at Hinjes hotel, Woodend, a township that apparently was at that time considered a more important centre than Rangiora, the election of five persons to form the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board took place. The importance of the occasion drew almost all the inhabitants of the countryside to the township. From the gable platform of the hotel stable the candidates unfolded their politics, and the speeches were immediately followed by the election. The voting was carried out in the primitive way of a show of hands. The candidates elected were the Rev. J. Raven, Joseph Beswick, Marmaduke Dixon, George Leslie Lee, and Abraham Jago, all men who had taken a prominent part in pioneering activities. A year later Mr Henry Blackett, who had in the meantime been elected to the Board, was appointed chairman, and filled the office with conspicuous ability until 1878, when he resigned to become Mayor of Rangiora. It was largely due to Mr Blackett's energy and influence that highway improvements were very soon brought about in Rangiora. To give some idea of the condition of what was known as the main road but is now High Street: Right across the road from the Junction. Hotel to what is now Hickmott's corner there was a wide deep gully which in wet weather carried a heavy stream of water and was at times in a wet muddy

condition at the bottom. Over the gully there was a plank for pedestrians, and a ford for other traffic.

Hazardous Journey; Further along the road near the Plough Inn there was another gully with mud and water at the bottom. The Red Lion at the east end and the Plough Inn and the Rangiora Hotel at the west end were of course frequented by those who enjoyed a "spot," and many a one over full came to grief in the mud and water through failing to negotiate the planks safely. A pilgrim father who in the early 'sixties lived beyond the township in the direction of Fernside used to relate one of his plank-walking adventures. It was a Saturday night, and he had come in to purchase the following week's supply of groceries. He tarried longer at the wine than was good for his legs. Starting for home, he safely negotiated the first plank bridge, but when he arrived at the next one he was pleased and relieved in his mind at beholding two planks crossing the dreaded gully. After audibly expressing his sense of gratitude to the individual who had been so thoughtful as to widen the bridge, he boldly stepped forward, but somehow the extra plank dematerialised under his foot, and he fell plump into the mud and water below. "I crawled out," he said, "in a bedraggled condition, wet to the skin, minus my kit of groceries buried in the mud, but thank heaven I still had a firm grip of a bottle of whisky.

Early Businesses. So much for our roads. Now to describe some of the business places and incidents they call to mind. Commencing at what is now Hickmott's corner: In the early 'sixties a building was erected there for Mr Thomas Thompson, who did business in it as a general storekeeper. It was here, I vividly recollect, that most of us kiddies of the day invested our pennies in sweets. One of Mr Thompson's shop assistants was Mr John Josling, who now resides at St. Albans, and only a few days since celebrated his golden wedding. Another of his assistants was Mr Robert Aherne, who in after years was well known amongst Christchurch journalists. It did not take us long to appreciate the fact that Jack and Bob were goodhearted fellows, and that our pennies had a much greater spending value with them than with their employer, therefore we often patiently watched for the exit of the latter from the shop before we ventured in to do business. Sometime after Mr Thompson's death the place became the first agency of the Colonial Bank, with Mr John Fulton in charge, and Mr Duncan Macfarlane, -afterwards owner of Lyndon station, as his ledger-keeper. Eventually the bank people demolished the building and erected the premises which some few years ago were pulled down to give place to Hickmott's buildings. They used it as the bank until its amalgamation with the Bank of New Zealand. The Red Lion Hotel, the next place in the street, was the most pretentious place in the town at the time, and the only business place constructed of bricks. The original Lion Hotel was a building of wood erected about 1855, with an upper storey lighted with numerous dormer windows in the old English style of architecture. It was destroyed by fire during the occupancy of one James Bassingthwaite, a man who became of considerable notoriety in the place. The first hostelry in the Rangiora settlement, it may be here noted, was situated in the Woodend Road where Mr Inch now resides. (The road from Woodend at that time was along

the Ashley bank.) The licensee was Mr G. Hanmer, a member of a family afterwards known in professional circles in Christchurch. For some reason the license was taken away from the house and the Red Lion Hotel was opened with Captain Foster, father of the late Mr J. W. Foster, as the licensee.

Story of Lodge. In one of the rooms the Rangiora Masonic Lodge, the predecessor of the present lodge of the craft, held its meetings. In this connexion a good story is told that on one occasion a candidate for admission to the lodge was awaiting initiation in the kitchen. The maidservant, a lively girl fond of a joke, remarked to hint that she did not know why, but whenever the Masons had a new man to join the lodge, she was asked to hwe a good fire burning and to leave the kitchen for a time. The candidate became very fidgety, and was evidently very ill at ease. Presently, the vision of a red-hot branding iron becoming too much for his nerves, he disappeared through the doorway, and it is almost needless to say there was no initiation ceremony that night.

A Gruesome Joke. I am reminded of another incident in connexion with the old hotel, that was for many a day recalled by the settlers with a hearty laugh. It was a practical joke played on my father, which it will be no disrespect to his memory to relate: There was a small party of merry blades in the township who were the authors of many practical jokes. There came a morning when one of them, George H , who was a specially likeable character, rose with a bad taste in his mouth, and feeling otherwise out of sorts. His indisposition was made the opportunity to hwe a joke at the expense of the undertaker, who had hitherto escaped being one of their victims. George was put to bed in an upper room of the hotel, and a messenger was despatched in hot haste to my father with the news that he had died suddenly and his box was required. It was said of my father that when he was seen moving about in a specially active manner, it was the sure sign of a death, and oil this occasion, as he hurried to the hotel enquiring as to "Who's dead now," this resulted in the news of George's sudden death going through the township like wildfire, and causing a great sensation, he being a particularly popular member of the community. At the hotel the undertaker was met by some of George's cronies, who with grave faces and subdued voices, confirmed the news of his passing. An inquest, they said, would not be necessary but, as poor George had died suddenly and the weather was hot, they thought his remains should be boxed up as soon as possible. Guided to the darkened "death chamber" he found the alleged corpse laid out in the bed, with hands crossed over the breast, and decently covered with a sheet. After taking a casual look at the face, which he thought seemed rather natural in appearance, but accounted for this by the sudden death, he ran his rule over the body, and jotted down the measurements in his notebook. He was retiring from the room feeling sad at the thought of his friend George being cut off in his early manhood in so tragic a manner when a voice from behind him roared out, "What the devil hwe you been doing to me I should like to know." Turning, he saw the supposed corpse sitting up, and rushing to the stairs he shouted out: "George has only been in a trance. He has come to life again. Bring him up some "brandy, and be quick about it." "That's the ticket," shouted George, "and charge it up to the

undertaker." Yelling with laughter, the practical jokers made for George's room, and my father quickly discovered how completely he had been hoaxed when drinks all round were demanded of him.

## Part II.

IN my last week's article I mentioned that James Bassingwaithe became of considerable notoriety in the place, but I should have added, not only in Rangiora but throughout Canterbury and further afield. He at first came much into the limelight over an action at law taken against him by the Road Board. The gully I previously described as crossing the road opposite the Junction Hotel continued its course through Thompson's section, across what was known as Ivory's Road, through the Lion Hotel garden, and right away to the field beyond what is now the East Belt. Bassingwaithe, objecting to the storm water passing through his garden, filled in the gully. The Road Board sent their roadman to clean it out. This they did, but at night Bassingwaithe had it filled in again. Next day the Road Board men invaded the garden and opened out the gully once more. Bassingwaithe then played his trump card. Gathering up all the old hoop-iron, tins, horse-shoes, and Whatnot of a metallic nature, he had these thoroughly mixed up, and tramped in with the earth returned to the watercourse, with the result that the Road Board gang when they set work once more found the work so difficult that they threw it up. The Road Board then took action against Bassingwaithe for obstructing the watercourse, but he beat them on the ground that in opening out the drain the original line of the gully was not followed. To make sure that the gully would not be opened in the future Bassingwaithe at once set to work to erect a concrete house over it in what is now Cone Street, and where it still stands. His interference with the flow of storm water along the gully, however, proved a blessing in disguise, for it was not very long before the gully was filled up in the centre of the township. I might mention a curious coincidence I experienced in connexion with the law case. Some three or four years ago there was a general clean-up at the Magistrate's Court, and a large number of old summonses dating back to the early 'sixties was set aside to be burnt. Out of curiosity I pulled out two or three from the bundle, and one, strange to say, was the summons issued by the Road Board against Bassingwaithe, with the magistrate's notes attached.

A Sensational Bankruptcy. Bassingwaithe was regarded as a man of considerable means. Besides erecting the hotel and the cottage before referred to, he built the wooden house next door, also the large three story concrete house so long occupied by the late Mr J. Skilling, and the concrete house a short distance down Ivory Street now belonging to Mrs R. H. Walker. He was a believer in building for posterity, and put his faith in concrete, a material first adopted at that time in Rangiora. Eventually, however, he ended his career in the place in a most sensational manner. Much to the astonishment of the townspeople he sought the refuge of the Bankruptcy Court on the plea that his estate had become involved through the loss of £2000. When on a visit to Dunedin, there were such suspicious circumstances surrounding the case that detectives were set to work, and Bassingwaithe and his wife were

both arrested charged with fraudulent bankruptcy. This of course caused a great sensation, which was intensified when Mrs Bassingwaithe Was searched, and sewn up in her undergarments was found nearly £400 in notes and gold. This find Was an incentive to detectives engaged on the case to make a most intensive search of the premises, and they were rewarded by finding another amount of about £400 in a tin hanging by a string down a Well at the rear of the house next the hotel, in Which Bassingwaithe was then living. His career ended in gaol, his death taking place while he was awaiting trial; and his wife was released. One of Bassingwaithe's acts called in question was making over to an old man who had acted as roustabout at the hotel, the concrete house built over the gully. This, no doubt, he intended to be a temporary arrangement until the bankruptcy was settled up. However, when Bassingwaithe was arrested the old man was so alarmed that he hanged himself in the house. Bassingwaithe's properties were; disposed of to satisfy the claims of his creditors, but the ownership of the house made over to the old man remained in question for some considerable time, until eventually it was taken over by the Public Trustee.

First Post Office. The next place of historic interest was a general store opened on October 1, 1858, by Mr G. C. Black, of Kaiapoi, as a branch of his business in that town. It was here the first post office in the settlement was opened, and Mr J. B. Wilson, manager for Mr Black', was the first postmaster. Previous to this the nearest post-office was at Kaiapoi, and some of the settlers took it in .turn to ride to the post town once a week, taking letters to post and bringing back the mail to distribute. With the post office open Mr Black conveyed the mail from and to Kaiapoi twice weekly. He was succeeded by Mr F. Bean (grandfather of one of our local lawyers) as mail carried until in 1862 Mr Wm. Sansom took over the mail contract and commenced a daily run with a horse and spring trap. Two years later he commenced to run a coach to Christchurch, bringing the mail direct, an enterprise greatly appreciated by the residents of the township. Mr Black's store was closed in 1865, the post office being transferred to Blackett's store, and the building was pulled down in 1871 to make way for the railway line. Other buildings that hwe disappeared were Mr W. Sansom's bakehouse, general store, tailor's shop, and dwelling; a blacksmith's shop and near-by dwelling owned by Mr Melbourne, who died in 1865; and finally Mr James Horniblow's wheelwright's shop, Which stood at the corner of what is now High Street and the East Belt.

A Celebrity. Mr Horniblow was a somewhat noted man, especially in the estimation of young folk, for his performance on the dulcimer, an instrument of antiquity often mentioned in Holy Writ, and from which the piano was evolved. For the information of those unfamiliar with the ancient instrument, I may describe it as a shallow box, triangular in shape, over the open top of which wires were stretched and tuned to harmonise. In performing on it two small hammers were used to tap the Wires. Mr Horniblow made his own instrument, and was a past master in performing on it. It is almost needless to say that his services were in request at the entertainments of the time. The really sweet music he made never failed to win an encore —the children saw to that—in fact, he could probably claim a record in that amongst the

performers of the early days. I recollect that he almost invariably prefaced his opening item at the concert with the announcement: "Ladies and Gentlemen — with auricular demonstration I will now endower to set you all alive." He certainly never failed in his endower, his music always having a merry lilt. His instrument, I have been informed, is still preserved as a treasured relic by one of his descendants. Mr Horniblow had also some fame as a weather prophet. Many of his predictions were as safe of fulfilment as some of those that occasionally emanate from the official meteorologists of the present generation. For example, there came a day with the sky of doubtful appearance, and his opinion was sought as to the prospects of the weather. After making a careful survey of the firmament he would deliver the profound verdict: "As far as I can judge it may rain and it may not."

Waste of Beer. Crossing the road to the spot where the late Mr James Marshall built his residence, it was here that Mr Edward A. Good first settled, about the year 1858, in a small cottage, and commenced to do a little business in settlers' necessities. He also established a brewery on a small scale, producing beer of a good old English flour which he peddled around with a basket. Sometimes station hands in for a spree would intercept him opposite the Red Lion Hotel, purchase his whole basket-full, and set up the bottles in a row on the road and have a "cockshying" competition. This they knew was a cause of keen grief to Mr Good, whose bump of economy was very highly developed, and he used to protest that he didn't care about what became of the beer, but the destruction of the bottles was a shocking waste. Mr Good, it may be noted, came of an old English family, and amongst the possessions he brought to the colony was his fox hunting uniform—green coat, riding breeches, etc.—but they remained but a curiosity in the new land. He possessed some means, and acquired the 50-acre block of land extending from the Woodend Road to Northbrook Road. Later he purchased a similar block extending northward from the Woodend Road to what is now the top end of the High School farm. Mrs Good, a most estimable lady, occupied her spare time at the cottage in teaching the young ideas to sprout—her little school being the second in the settlement. It was in this cottage, too, that some of the settlers, particularly those of the Baptist persuasion, met on Sundays for divine worship, the preacher being Mr T. S. Mannering, who in partnership with Mr A. H. Cunningham had a sheep station in the Fernside district. Mr Mannering was a fluent speaker, and highly gifted as a preacher, and his services were ever held in grateful remembrance by the little band of settlers to whom he ministered.

The First Brewery. A few chains further along the Woodend Road Howard's brewery was located. The working man certainly did not go short of his beer in the early days, seeing that in addition to three hotels there were three breweries besides Mr Good's little business effort in the same line. The first brewery established by Mr Howard was on Northbrook Road, where the willow trees are at the end of the High School farm. After a few years in that locality Mr Howard and his son, Mr George Howard, built the much larger brewery and malt-house on the Woodend Road, sun-dried bricks being the material used. The clay for the bricks was dug out on the spot, and the exaction formed

the basement of the main building. At the north-West corner a spring of the purest Water Was struck and from it a strong stream flowed through the brewery, keeping it cool, and providing a never-failing supply for the brewery. The brewing was carried out on a large scale, and a good trade was done in yeast. I hwe a vivid recollection of being one of a long queue waiting before daylight on a cold Winter's morning for the brewery doors to open to get the weekly supply of yeast for the baking day. Eventually Mr George Howard died and the business was closed down in 1871. The building was afterwards used as a wool-store and wool auction room by Mr W. Buss, and later as a bacon curing factory by the North Canterbury Bacon Curing Company, but, becoming ruinous, and partially destroyed by fire, it was demolished.

### Part III

IN my sketch of that, portion of the main thoroughfare of Rangiora on the south side from the Drain Road to what is now the East Belt I overlooked a little shop between Melbourne's smithy and Horniblow's corner. I mention it now to recall an unfortunate experience of the Pentecost family, and one illustrative of the trials of an early settler. The family arrived in the settlement some time in the late 'fifties, and acquired a section for their home. Setting to work without delay, Mr Pentecost erected his dwelling and all seemed to be going well, but alas, along came one of the Government surveyors, who discovered the house to be on the roadway. Mr Pentecost had no alternative but to pull down his home and rebuild it. Now to deal with the north side of the road from Good's Lane, now Good Street.

Mr Good's Beer. The first place to come under notice is Mr Good's business premises. Mr Good extended his business by removal from his cottage on the Woodend Road I referred to in my previous article to the site now occupied by the Junction Hotel. There, in a small building, he kept a varied stock, one of my boyhood purchases, I recollect, being a Jew's harp. Eventually he erected a large store with dwelling attached, restricting his stock mainly to drapery and clothing with Cookham boots as a speciality. His stock was imported direct from the Old Country and was famed for excellence of quality. For some years he continued the business of brewing beer, commenced in his cottage home. His brewing operations were carried on in a building at the rear of his shop, which is still in existence behind the present fish shop. He was, be it mentioned, extremely conservative in the disposal of his beer otherwise than for coin of the realm. Free beer for the working man had no place in the economics of his business, and in this connexion the following good story is told: On one occasion Mr Good had turned out what he considered to be a specially good brew, and the liquor being ready for market he was looking for confirmation of his judgment as to quality. Living at the top end of Good's Lane was Mr James Miles, familiarly known as "Grandfather Miles," he being the aged head of a large family of children and grandchildren, many of whom are among us today. He was a native of Wiltshire, a county famed for home-brewed ale, a gallon of which, one old friend was wont to declare, he could drink at a sitting, and then climb the cellar stairs in full command of his legs. On his way from home to the Junction Hotel to get his "Eleven O'clock" he

encountered Mr Good at his shop door. "Miles," exclaimed Mr Good, "you are just the man I want. You are regarded as the best judge of beer in the district, come along to my brew house and taste my latest, and pass your opinion on it. I believe it's the best I hwe turned out.", Greatly surprised at Mr Good's unusual show of hospitality in the way of liquor, but more than willing to enjoy a draught of a brew reminiscent of the ale of the Old Land, and incidentally to save his beer money, he gladly accepted the invitation. At the brew house he cast a rapid glance around for a pewter pot, but there was not a drinking vessel in sight. Reassured, however, by the heartiness of his host's invitation from the far end to "Step this way," he stepped. "Here's the barrel," announced Mr Good, and with that he pulled out the bung, and said "Now, Miles, just dip your finger in the beer through the bung "hole and taste it, and tell me what you think of the brew." Miles dejectedly complied, but what his verdict was is not recorded. It is known, however, that when he reached the haven of the thirsty, to wit the Junction tap room, he added a rider to his verdict richly decorated with adjectives uncomplimentary to his late host, and his "small" beer. It is said, too, that the addition of a "spot" of brandy to his eleven o'clock pint of ale was required to revive him from the shock he suffered. . Mr Good joined the great majority on December 6, 1875, and his son, Mr E. R. Good, reigned over the business in his stead. Edward the younger, I may here note, commenced a long career in public life until the year 1870 as secretary to the committee that established the public library, and was one of the first Borough Councillors. He replaced his father's old shop with the present block of brick buildings, the dwelling portion being moved back, and is now occupied Mr W. Manson.

In the year 1868 Mr John Sinclair opened the Junction Hotel, which he and his brother William had erected. Under the management of the licensee and his good wife the hostel became widely and favourably known. In the early days nearly all the meetings of bodies taking part in public affairs were held at the hotels, which closed at 11 p.m. Even the first meeting to promote the erection of the Presbyterian Church was held at the Junction, those present being the four Johns of the congregation, which hitherto had worshipped at the Oddfellows' Hall— John Macfarlane, John Johnston, John Duff and John Sinclair, with Mrs Sinclair. Seven years after opening the hotel Mr Sinclair died and the place was purchased by Mr Sheppard, who about the time the Borough was formed had it removed and replaced by the present handsome edifice, which the march of progress demanded in the interests of the travelling public. It may be added that Mrs Sinclair lived among us until she passed away in the hundredth year of her life (1928).

Some Early Sports. In the 'sixties a livery stable stood next door to the hotel. Here the station hands in for a spree put up their nags, and many a wager was lost and won over the trotting or galloping performances of some of the best of the animals. The course of the trotting trials of speed was usually the road between the Junction Hotel and the Woodend Hotel, a distance of exactly four miles. Another pastime much favoured by the station hands and other would-be sports was a duck hunt, a sport that would not be tolerated now although not more cruel than coursing hares with greyhounds, or hunting



them with hounds. In a duck hunt a good strong drake was turned out on a pond, the usual place being a gravel pit on the road, now the East Belt, which still exists, though in a dry state. Here there was a good expanse of deep water, and the dogs were set to catch the duck, their owners and others laying wagers on their ability to do so. The duck almost invariably succeeded in exhausting the dogs by continually diving and bobbing up first at one side of the pond and then at the other; the dog that showed the best form being declared the winner. The livery stable eventually gave place to a building erected by Mr John Lilly for a general store, which Messrs Hannah and Crothers carried on in partnership for several years. On the partnership being dissolved Mr J. Crothers took over the business, and ultimately disposed of it the North Canterbury Stores Company. The adjoining shop, now occupied by Mr E. B. P. Brown, was also erected by Mr Lilly, and for over 60 years it has housed a drapery business, passing from one firm to another, Messrs G. L. Beath and Co. of Christchurch, being the original proprietors, with Mr Wm. Best as manager. A Canine Prodigy I recollect being the owner of a puppy which grew into such a mongrel that I was glad to give it away to Mr Best's eldest boy. Strange to say, the animal, although such an ugly canine specimen, proved to possess an almost uncanny intelligence. This his boy master developed to such a degree that it became the wonder dog of the town. In those days business was carried on until eight or nine o'clock at night, and on summer evenings the street performances of the dog were a great source of amusement. Next door to the draper's a chemist's shop was established, and is still carried on. Our pioneer medico was Dr W. B. Tripe, whose residence was the large house in Ashley Street, still in existence after 70 years, standing back in the open field some chains from the roadway. Both my wife and I still have a pleasant memory of being two of a large party of town children entertained to tea by the good doctor and his wife on their lawn. After practising for a few years Dr Tripe was joined by his brother-in-law, Dr J. B. Downs, who, as well as assisting the Doctor in his practice, acted as dispenser in the chemist's shop before referred to. In time Dr Tripe removed to Wellington, and Dr Downes, taking over the practice, remained in Rangiora a great number of years.

The Doctor Scored a Win. Early in his career the Doctor had an experience that caused a good deal of amusement. Counted amongst the settlers was an individual named Hepworth, who was a bit of a wag. He had run up an account of several pounds with the Doctor, who failed in many attempts to collect it. Ultimately he threatened legal proceedings unless it was paid by a certain date. Thereupon Hepworth commenced to collect all the coppers he could get hold of, much to the curiosity of the business people. Having exhausted the town supply he went further abroad to Christchurch and elsewhere until he had the quantity he required to meet his liability. Then he betook himself to the Doctor's with the coppers in a sack over his shoulder. On the Doctor responding to his ring Hepworth announced that he had come to pay his account, and he was gladly asked to step in, the Doctor at the same time eyeing the sack with some curiosity. Hepworth deposited in with care on the floor, presented his account, and asked for a receipt. There being no money in sight the Doctor hesitated a little and then asked whether it was a

cheque or in cash. "Cash of course," said Hepworth, "and here it is." Suiting the action to the word, he upended the sack and shot the coppers on to the floor. The Doctor viewed the heap of pennies and half-pennies, a large percentage of which were business tokens in common use at the time, with some astonishment, and then remarked that a legal tender of copper was only a shilling's worth, but he supposed he had better accept the payment. "Very well," said Hepworth, "give me your receipt. I'm in a hurry." "Sit down, Hepworth," replied the Doctor, "I must count the money before giving a receipt," and with that he gathered up a handful of the coins and began to count them very deliberately. Hepworth, after watching him for a few minutes, suddenly jumped up and made for the door, exclaiming, with a adjectival preface, "Good day, Doctor, you win. Send the receipt when you finish your count."

The Fifth Town Clock. Next to the dispensary there were two semi-detached shops. One of these in the 'seventies was occupied by my father, who had a bookselling and stationery business and the "Lyttelton Times" agency. Over his shop he erected the first town clock. It had three faces, and struck the hour on a bell that could be heard for a good distance around. A grandfather's clock works supplied the motion and it kept excellent time. An incident happened in connexion with the clock which is worth relating. A new manager came to reside at the Colonial Bank right opposite the clock. The second morning after his arrival he entered my father's shop evidently in a much disturbed state of mind, and demanded that the clock should be stopped from striking at night, for the reason that the sound of the bell prevented him and members of his family from sleeping. My father protested that this was the first complaint made on that score, and it would be well to call in the next door neighbour who slept within six feet of the bell, and hear what he had to say. Mr C. Jones, who occupied the shop as a basket-maker, was out, but Mrs Jones came in, and on the situation being explained to her she made a most emphatic protest against the bell being silenced, declaring that without its familiar sound they would not be able to sleep. Assuming the functions of an arbitrator, my father decided that the bell should continue to soothe the good lady and her household into the land of dreams. In the shop next door to my father's a branch of the Union Bank of Australia was opened in 1873 with Mr Chas. Tribe as manager. Adjoining this was a rough-looking structure mainly built of slabs with their bark sides outwards in which Mr J. Keast dwelt, and opened what was, I believe, the first saddler's shop in the settlement. The shop window, I recollect, was protected from damage by passing cattle by a stout post and rail fence. In the next shop, which is still standing and serving the same purpose, Messrs George and Robertson carried on a baker's and confectioner's business, their oven being the one originally used by Mr W. Sansom, referred to in my last week's article.

Yours Truly Arrives in the Settlement. On what is now the Bank of New Zealand corner my father built his first home towards the end of 1858, and it was here on the morning of Good Friday 1860, I first saw the light of — "day," I was going to add, but it was more likely a tallow candle, or probably, being an important occasion, a sperm candle. In those days tallow candles at 6d per

lb. in shops, or home made, were in general use, with perhaps a sperm candle as a Sunday luxury, of the ancient "Palm Tree" brand, which early settlers will remember. Soon after my first birthday my father disposed of the cottage to Mr C. Bourke, who for several years used it as a chemist's shop. He also, as a side line, extracted teeth with a formidable-looking pair of forceps, and a strong arm. Gas and painless dentistry were then undiscovered luxuries, and if one lost his teeth he had to rely on his gums to do duty in their place. Time came when the cottage was removed, and Mr G. Cone afterwards occupied the corner with a butcher's shop, but this too was removed to the corner of: High and Albert Streets, and on the site the Bank of New Zealand was built in 1878, the agency of the Bank having previous to that been in an office at the front of Mr W. H. Perceval's old residence on the corner site now occupied by the N.Z. Farmers' Co-op. Stores. A Rule That Cut Both Ways Not long after the new bank was opened an amusing little incident occurred, which is worth relating, connected with the rules of the institution. A lad, who had Tom for his first name, who was employed in a local nursery, called in to change his wages cheque. Having received his cash he went outside and there counted it. Returning to the bank he said to the teller "You've made a mistake in my change." The teller in a curt manner replied "Can't correct any mistake after you went outside. It's a rule of the Bank. You should hwe counted your change before leaving." "You won't correct it, then?" said Tom with surprise. "No," said the teller, "it's your loss and you will know better another time." Tom retired but when he got outside he pushed open the door, and putting in his head, said "You gave me a half-crown too much." "Come back, come back," exclaimed the teller. "No fear," said Tom, "I'm outside and can't correct any mistake. It's against the rule of the bank. Good day."

First Ploughing Match. Before the railway station was constructed in 1872 the land opposite the Red Lion Hotel was an open paddock stretching away northward to the Ashley with only one house upon it, that of Mr J. Ponsonby, near the cemetery. It was on this paddock the first ploughing match in the northern district was held sometime in the 'sixties. On that occasion the best ploughing was done by Mr Jonathan, father of Mr C. W. Bell, one of our ex-Mayors, who had for a team one of the first draught horses brought into North Canterbury, by name Black Robin, and a bullock called Rodney. Unfortunately, owing to Rodney being rather slow on his feet, Mr Bell was disqualified for finishing five minutes after the time limit. Those having the management of ploughing matches of the present day might with advantage follow this good example of adhering strictly to regulations, the time limit as now set being honoured more in the breach than in the observance. During the period 1858 to 1865 there was a great influx of emigrants to the colony, and a large number found their way to Rangiora and many of them were sheltered ill a camp of bell tents pitched by the Provincial Government in the spot now occupied by the railway station. Later a building was erected for the accommodation of immigrants, and it afterwards did duty until quite a recent time tis the station master's residence. A short distance beyond where the railway line crosses the street there was one of the butcher's shops of the 'sixties, belonging to Mr George Hessel.

#### Part IV.

IN the present sketch I intend to deal with the north side of the main road through Rangiora from Good's Lane westward. On the first section, extending from the lane to the spot on which the building containing Mr Kippenberger's office now stands, an eccentric individual named Tyack squatted down in the year 1858, and there built himself a one-roomed shack of slabs. The Maori pa at Tuahiwi being only three miles away, he, being apprehensive of a native rising, took the precaution to line the shack walls with clay sods, and to make loopholes all round to enable him to give the enemy a warm reception with his shotgun, which he kept ready loaded. Seeing the Maoris were particularly docile and peaceful, with, seemingly not a thought beyond the sale of fish and flax kits to their pakeha friends, Tyack's citadel was a source of much amusement to his fellow-settlers. Another of his eccentricities was to make a large boiling of plain dumplings, lock himself in his fortress, and keep to his bunk until he had consumed them, a retirement that sometimes extended over the best part of a week. It was thought that he held the idea that a Maori attack on his stronghold was pending. As he did no work, it was supposed he was a remittance man. Tyack had a well on the section from which he obtained his drinking water. It was in connexion with this well that my father had good reason to believe he had a narrow escape from being murdered. He was engaged building Black's store, referred to in a previous article, and was on the roof nailing on the shingles. Tyack came to the foot of the ladder and called to him to come down for a few minutes. My father refused, saying he was too busy, and asked Tyack what he wanted Tyack replied that it was something important he wished to speak to him about. My father said there was no one within hearing and there was no reason why he should not speak out. Tyack after vainly trying to get my father off the roof at last went away. A few days after, he met my father and said "I am very glad you did not come down from the roof, because I had intended to murder you." "Murder me!" said my father in surprise. "What for, pray?" "Well," said Tyack, "I thought you had poisoned the water in my well, and when I came to you I had a hammer concealed under my coat, and I intended to brain you directly you reached the ground. I found afterwards that the water was all right, and I am glad I didn't kill you." Eventually Tyack fell in love with a young lady of the township, who, however, rejected his amorous advances, and he disappeared, never to be heard of again. It was reported that he was last seen on White's bridge gazing into the water of the Waimakariri, and it was generally supposed that he ended his life in the river. Mr Good had a lien on the section for debt and several years afterwards obtained a title to it from relatives of Tyack in England. For a long time the section was used by children as a common playing ground, and it was there a large marquee was set up for the banquet on the occasion of the opening of the north railway line to Rangiora on November 5, 1872. The time came when Mr H. E. Nathan, of Christchurch, acquired the corner site on Good's Lane and erected two semidetached shops which were first occupied by Mr Matthew Shaw as a hairdresser and tobacconist, and Mr R. Ball, watchmaker.

Justice's Justice. It was in connexion with Mr Shaw's tenancy that a Magistrate's Court case was heard, and ended in a way the reverse of satisfactory to the plaintiff, who was the Mr Nathan mentioned above. He had a dispute with his tenant and sued him for £8. The case came before Mr A. H. Cunningham, J.P., Mr Shaw having a lawyer and Mr Nathan conducting his own case. In the course of his evidence Mr Nathan handed a receipt to the Bench. Mr Cunningham scrutinised it for a few moments, then peering over his spectacles at Mr Nathan, said "There is no stamp on this receipt. You are fined £5." Mr Nathan was dumbfounded, but recovering blurted out "It's monstrous. I won't pay." "Very well," said Mr Cunningham, "your case will not proceed until you do pay, and if you won't pay the alternative is seven days' gaol with hard labour." It was a very crestfallen Mr Nathan who with every mark of reluctance abstracted five sovereigns from his purse, and placed them on clerk's desk. But this was not the worst of his experience, for he lost the case, and had to pay over £3 in costs.' Next to Tyack's section Mr James Gulliver was located, having arrived in the settlement at the end of March, 1858, after a four months' voyage from London. Mr Gulliver acquired a half acre section for the small sum of £2/10/-, on which he built a small place of sun-dried bricks consisting of a shop and dwelling, his business being that of a baker. My own early recollection of the shop is remembrance of the penny gingerbread squares which we kiddies esteemed as the most delectable of Mr Gulliver's confectionery efforts, and which competed very strongly with our commercial relations with Thompson's corner store, where, as related in a previous article, we purchased our sweets. Next door to Mr Gulliver Mr T. Pring had a small roughly-built shop where he made boots to measure, or neatly executed repairs. These buildings, a few years later, gave place to more pretentious business premises, and these in turn were demolished and replaced by the present block of shops of modern design. Hard by Mr Pring's shop the Mandeville and Rangiora Road Board formed in 1864, after meeting in Woodend for some time, erected its permanent office, with a dwelling for the clerk. The office was also the Magistrate's Courthouse, and the Public Library before the Institute Hall and Library was built in 1872. There are many interesting and amusing incidents I could relate concerning the court cases and meetings held in the old office, but these I must leave for a special article. For the benefit of those who have taken up their abode in the Borough during the past twenty years it may be well to state that Allison's Buildings now occupy the site of the Road Board office.

Genesis of the Fire Brigade. At the rear of the Road Board office there was the first fire brigade station with bell tower and look-out. The brigade came into existence on May 16, 1874, and out of twenty-six original members, with Mr J. Johnston as the first superintendent there are only two, Mr Thomas Boyd of Christchurch and Mr E. Cooper, Cust. The first plant consisted of two small manual pumping engines presented by the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company. One of these is still doing duty at Southbrook, and ultimately should have a place in the museum. The other was sent to Oxford during an extensive bush fire, which threatened the township, but was not heard of again. A year after the brigade was formed the large manual engine that did good service for many years was purchased at a cost of £240. Then

came the advent of a steam fire engine in 1883, christened "Wainui" (big water) by the then Mayor, Mr J. Johnston, with a bottle of "sham" champagne broken on the engine. The cost of the engine' was £800, paid out of the general fund of the Borough. Shortly after the Borough was formed in 1878 the Brigade station was moved to its present site. I hwe a very clear recollection of a test made of the water supply when the Brigade was being promoted. The use of the Kaiapoi manual engine was obtained, and it was placed at a well — which I believe still exists—at the rear of Mr Blackett's shop. The pump was manned by a full complement of lusty spectators, while Mr Blackett was on his knees at the mouth of the well with a string in his hand, to which was attached a wooden float. The word "Go" was given, and I question whether any fire in the engine's native town had called for such a prodigiously valiant effort as that put forth, the ambition of the pumpers seemingly being to suck the well dry or "bust" the pump. Mr Blackett excitedly worked his float, but much to the wonderment of all, the string wouldn't give out more than an inch or two. Urged by Mr Blackett and the spectators to greater effort, the men at the handles made a supreme spurt and then collapsed with exhaustion. I recollect that one pf those who had loyally stuck to the handle and whose equatorial measurement gave evidence of his enjoyment to the full of the successful culinary ability of his good wife, appeared to be on the verge of apoplexy. Mopping the perspiration from his fiery face, he delivered himself of the observation that he had been under-man in a saw pit in the bush, but he would rather pull the saw for half a day than work the darned pump for ten minutes. It is - almost needless to say that those who worked so strenuously had their reward served out to them in Mr Blackett's famous cellar. I recollect this incident as being the first proof of the wonderful inexhaustible supply of pure water our borough is blessed with. The concrete shop and dwelling adjoining the Road Board office now occupied by Mr R. Sinclair was erected by Mr Max Sklaark and used him as a saddler's shop, where he built up a good business. Unfortunately for him, however, he contracted a severe attack of the land fever in the great boom of 1878, and selling out, he went farming at Ellis's flat on land consisting of more boulders than soil. All the amateur farmer was known to produce was some turnips, specimens of which he triumphantly exhibited in Rangiora. He was soon convinced, however, that there was little to be made by an inexperienced farmer, with the high price of land as a handicap, and it was not long before the bank put on the screw, and Mr Sklaark returned to his trade a very 1 sad and a much poorer and wiser man. Next to the concrete building there were two small shops, in one of which Mr E. Barnard opened the first photographic studio in the place, and in the other Mr It. Ball commenced business as a watchmaker in the early seventies. Close by was Mr Henry Blackett's general store, established in 1858, which for many years was the most important business place in the township, as was its proprietor the most prominent man in the public life of the place, first as chairman of the Road Board, and afterwards as the first Mayor of the Borough.

A Famous Cellar. Mr Blackett's business included that of a wine and spirit merchant, and being of a hospitable nature, his cellar had no little fame among the institutions of the town. It was here that many of his confreres in

public life were primed for duty on the platform, or in dealings with civic matters in other ways. It is a matter of history that the first set of borough by-laws was compiled in close proximity to the cellar, with a bottle of his best import of "Johnny Walker" or some other ancient brand of Scotch close at hand to tune to concert pitch the brains of those who had undertaken the onerous task of providing a set of commandments calculated to keep the feet of their fellow burgesses in the path of virtue and good citizenship. When the Wine Flowed Free In connexion with the liquor branch of Mr Blackett's business an incident occurred one day that left a lasting impression on the memories of some of the boys of the town. The stock was replenished by direct importation, and a consignment coming to hand that could not be entirely accommodated in the cellar, a hogshead of port wine was being hauled to an upper storey of the store by means of a block and tackle attached to an arm projecting over the footpath. The cask was well up to the arm when the sling gave way, and down came its precious burden. The cask not being constructed to stand such rough usage, the staves burst asunder, and out poured the good red wine into the gutter. As it happened, some boys on their way from school had been interested spectators of the hoisting of the cask, and no sooner was the wine on the flow than several of them were flat down on their stomachs drinking it. It can be imagined that before they could be stopped there were some very drunk and very sick boys about. Although some found relief in parting with the liquor as quickly as they imbibed it, a few required the aid of the doctor and his stomach pump. One boy who had probably a larger capacity than his fellows was unconscious for two days, and his life was despaired of. Many years afterwards in recounting his adventure he told me that the last thing impressed on his mind before the blank of two days was seeing some object float past his nose as he drank.

Tippling Neddy. A unique means of conveyance of goods from Christchurch for Mr Blackett was adopted by an old man who made periodical trips over the rough road to Rangiora. His team consisted of two large billy-goats harnessed to a light cart, which covered the journey in very good time. The back load consisted of bottles, which could be gathered in fair quantity, the settlers being specially partial to bottled porter, being considered a desirable and efficacious "pick-me-up" for the nursing mothers of the families so fashionable in the early days. Eventually the police interfered, and prohibited the use of goats. The old man substituted a pair of donkeys, goodness knows from where, which he drove tandem. The leader of the team was a notorious beer drinker, and in pulling up at an hotel his master had to unfasten his traces and tie him securely to the hitching rail until Neddy was supplied with his allowance of half-a-pint of ale, otherwise he would make a frantic attempt to get into the barroom, his olfactory nerves apparently being capable of scenting his favourite beverage within.

Part V.

CONTINUING my reminiscences: Just beyond his store Mr Blackett had ejected two shops, with dwelling accommodation. These were occupied—one by Mr John Scott, a tailor, who also practised the photographic art as a

sideline, and the other by Mr Richard Truman, bootmaker, but there came a night when fire broke out in Scott's premises and destroyed both buildings. It may be noted that misfortune in the way of fire followed the Truman family, for some years later at Waikari the father was burnt to death in a futile attempt to rescue one of the children from a fire which destroyed his shop and dwelling; and several years after that tragic occurrence one of his sons living on the Terrace Road near Balcairn had his whole family of four children burnt to death under most distressing circumstances. The next building to come under notice was a butcher's shop, with attached dwelling, owned by Mr John Lilly. It was here about the year 1861 that Mr Lilly laid the foundation of his successful business career.' At the outset he was in partnership with Mr C. Deal, 'but after a few years the firm was dissolved, and Mr Lilly carried on the business until he relinquished it to start cattle dealing.

Killed By Lightning. About a couple of chains further along the road stood a house occupied by two brothers named Abraham and William Jones, both of whom were killed by lightning during a thunderstorm, while mowing oats in a field about where the Maternity Hospital now stands, their dead bodies being found lying close together. The storm was not a severe one, but from a heavy cloud a vivid flash of lightning was seen over the spot where the men were mowing, and to this their death was attributed. Their house eventually fell into the hands of Mr Lilly, who enlarged it and, naming it "Rose Alma," lived there with his family for many years. Afterwards it became the residence of his son-in-law, Mr R. Kinley, but while in his occupation it was burnt down by a fire that spread from an undertaker's shop next door. The undertaker's shop was built by Mr George Dale, who, a carpenter by trade, previously occupied the site with his workshop.

An Enterprising Undertaker. A short time after the undertaker's place was built, a doctor's residence was erected on the other side of the street, right opposite. The manufacturer of caskets, then in occupation of the shop, seeing business possibilities just across the way, and being no doubt actuated by a desire to impress the medico's patients with the cheering fact that if he failed them they still had a good friend to provide their last needs, he had a large sign painted with bright yellow letters on a dark ground, advertising his calling, and placed it along his picket fence, in a position that could not fail to strike the eye from the doctor's gate. Surely no one could accuse the doctor of being callous to his neighbour's calamity if he breathed a prayer of thankfulness on the night the coffin shop went up in flames.

Over Port Hills in the Mud. Reference to Mr George Dale reminds me of an experience he had, and which he related to me. He was a Londoner, and, due no doubt to his city upbringing, he dressed in a spruce style, and was very particular about his boots, his feet being small. He arrived in Lyttelton about the end of the year 1859, and a few days after landing he decided to pay a visit to Christchurch. Before leaving London he purchased a particularly fine pair of Wellington boots, and these he put on for the first time. To continue the story in his own words: "I started," he said, "to climb the bridle track over the Port hills, but had not gone far before the thick mud commenced to pull



the boots off my feet. I continued on, however, until at last the heels of my boots turned tip and looked at me, and I was walking on the uppers. This could not go on, so I pulled off my boots and stockings, and finally negotiated the hill, but was in a shocking muddy state about my legs. The track to Christchurch was also in a bad condition, but I trudged on teaching the vicinity of the White Hart Hotel, I was ashamed to show myself, and kept out of sight for a time. At last I summed up courage and slipped up to the back door of the hotel. In answer to my knock a smart looking young woman opened the door, and I said in a very flustered manner, "I am ashamed to show myself in such a dirty condition; can you oblige me with a bucket of water to wash my feet?" The girl gave a hearty laugh and exclaimed: "Ashamed of yourself, indeed. Why, you silly fellow, do you think you are the only one who has been in the mud of the bridle track. Go round to the front of the hotel and you will find buckets of water ready for anyone to wash the mud off. They are always there for the purpose." I went round to the front," said Mr Dale, "and sure enough the buckets of water were there and I washed unashamed."

George's Adventure With a Cow. Soon after Mr Dale acquired his selection he was fired with an ambition to be a progressive colonist, like some of his fellow settlers, by possessing a cow. Coming from London, he knew no more about a cow and its management, than a cow knew about him. His choice fell upon a young and active animal in the herd of Mr C. Deal, who lived on the Fernside Road about a quarter of a mile beyond what is now the West Belt. Equipped with a long rope George set out to bring home his purchase, and made his first mistake in tying the rope round the animal's neck instead of its horns. All went well for a time, but George's arms began to ache with the strain of holding the cow to a reasonable pace. Then the brilliant idea occurred to him that if he tied the rope round his waist it would ease his arms. He quickly put the idea into practice, but no sooner was he securely tied to the rope than the cow took fright at some object and quickened her pace. George shouted to her to stop, but regarding his voice as an urge for more strenuous endower, she nobly responded. Being a short man, the speed limit of George's legs was soon reached, and down he went. By this time he was near the Plough Inn, and his frantic cries for help brought an immediate response, several men rushing from the bar room. Their sudden appearance, however, startled the cow into a fresh burst of speed, and her victim at the rope end was carried with a rush through the tussocks, his nether garments down over his boots and trailing behind, into and out of the gully, where my old friend missed the plank as narrated in a former article, and round the corner into the by-road now named White Street, at a greatly reduced speed owing to the heavy pull out of the gully. A few chains along the road her human anchor brought the cow to a standstill. But what a state little George was in. The rope had kept his upper garments secure, but he was bare below, and the mud he had collected in his passage through the gully made him almost unrecognisable. Fortunately the cow kept to the tussocks, otherwise George's plight would have been still more serious. As it was he lost a\* good deal of skin, and for a time he could take his meals far more comfortably standing than sitting.

Six By Four. A little cottage next door to Mr Dale's workshop for many years sheltered an old couple, Mr and Mrs William Gosden, who were regarded in the settlement as a notable example of "the long and the short of it." The husband was six feet tall, and his wife not much over four feet. Despite her small stature the little woman did much good service to the community in the capacity of a monthly nurse, while her husband followed the trade of a carpenter, helping to build many of the early houses. After he gave up the more strenuous part of his trade he was a familiar figure every fine Saturday trundling his wheelbarrow, with a bearing strap over his shoulders, to the Ashley riverbed to collect driftwood for his week's supply of firing. Near Mr Gosden's there were two shops belonging to Mr Lilly, in one of which Mr J. Crothers, referred to in a previous article, made his first venture in Rangiora as a general storekeeper. These two places also went up in flames. It will be observed that the portion of the road from Blackett's shop to what is now King Street was singularly unfortunate in regard to fires. Across the thoroughfare just referred to stood the old Masonic Hall, where the Rangiora Lodge of Free Masons, having shifted from the Red Lion Hotel, flourished for a season, and then languished away to disbandment. After the Lodge ceased to function about the middle 'sixties the hall was used by the Rifle Volunteer Corps as a barrack room or drill-shed for a time, until the assembly room was built at the west end of the township, to which I will refer later. When Lodge Ashley was established use was made of the hall until the new one was provided, in Perceval Street.

Curiosity Rewarded. A lady living next door to the old hall frequently expressed her curiosity as to what went on inside, and when she heard that the Lodge belongings were to be removed to the new hall, she took her station at a window overlooking the doorway determined to see how much of the Craft's mystic rites would be revealed by the Next day she duly reported to her neighbours that the only articles she saw of a mysterious or suspicious character were a box that looked like a coffin, and a beer barrel. Being a leading light amongst the women total abstinence propagandists of the day, she did not fail to draw attention to the close relationship between the coffin and the beer-barrel, and to express the hope that they were used as symbols to warn the brethren against the danger of tarrying long at the wine. The next building to which an especial interest attached was the old schoolroom opposite the Anglican Church, which in addition to being a seat of learning was used as the parish hall. For a short time following the establishment of the Church of England School about the year 1860, under the mastership of Mr Charles Merton, the sexes were mixed. Afterwards the girls had a room to themselves under a lady teacher, and finally were removed to the new school referred to above. However, when the present district primary school was opened the girls' school was closed. The room was then made use of by Mr Charles G. Chapman, who had refused the position of headmaster of the district school, and opened a private school under the name of Earnley Academy. This school too was closed in 1878, when Mr Chapman took up the duties of first town clerk of the Borough, a position he filled for a very short period before death claimed him after a few hours' illness.

Baptised in Candle Grease. In the early days a good many entertainments were held in the room, and it was here that Mr Horniblow was at his best with his dulcimer music, referred to in a previous article. It was here, too, that the Rev. J. W. Stack, so well known in connexion with his mission work amongst the Maoris of Tuahiwi, occasionally gave lectures on native life and customs. Although I was under 10 years of age at the time, I have a clear recollection of Mr Stack telling the story of the taking of the Kaiapohia pa by Te Rauparaha and his 600 North Island warriors, and the cannibal feastings on the bodies of the slaughtered inhabitants of the pa. He had with him on the platform a native named Charley Wi, who with his sister, known in after years as Mrs Wi Naihira, were as children amongst those who managed to escape from the enemy. Another recollection I have of the room is that of the primitive lighting arrangements. Candles were used, of course, and they were in sets of four on crossed pieces of wood, suspended from the roof down the centre of the room. If the windows were opened and ever such a gentle breeze came in, those seated within range of the candles received a baptism of grease. I write thus from personal experience. A field several acres in area extended from the school to what is now White Street north. This land belonged to Archdeacon Dudley, the first minister of the parish, and he named it Earnley Place, after, I believe, his birthplace. It was used principally in the early days as a drill ground for the Rifle Volunteer Company, and for some experiences connected therewith, which will be another story in a future article. I have good reason to recollect the many skirmishing manoeuvres carried out by the blue-coated soldiers, with a lavish expenditure of blank cartridges, the Maori outbreak in the North Island being the incentive for military service.

A Famous Signboard. The only other place that needs mention was the Plough Inn, opened by Mr Solomon Stephens about the year 1860. It was typical of many of the hostelrys of the pioneer days. The license authorised the sale of wine and beer only, and there was no special obligation in regard to accommodation of travellers, although provision was generally made for such. Mr Stephens followed the old English custom of having a signboard adorned with a painting appropriate to the name of the house. In his case he had an illustration of a man ploughing, and the sign was regarded by the kiddies of the town as a wonderful work of art, and was a never-failing source of interest to them. Situated at the extreme western end of the settlement, it was the last place of refreshment for teamsters on their way to Oxford for timber, and the first place on their return. Bullock-punching was a thirsty job, the free flow of adjectives considered necessary to keep the team up to their yokes requiring frequent lubrication of the vocal organs.

A Typical Sod Dwelling. Just beyond the Plough Inn and standing back some chains from the main road there was to be seen on the open landscape a good specimen of the sod house of the early days. This was erected by Mr Wm. Smith in the year 1858 and stood for about 70 years. Although timber was available, many of the early settlers preferred to build their homes with sods. There was an art in cutting the sods to fit neatly, and make a strong job, a finish being given to both exterior and interior with a thick plaster of clay. A thatched roof of straw or rushes completed a comfortable dwelling, cool in

summer and warm in winter. Replastered on the outside at intervals of a few years, these houses kept in thorough good condition, age having very little effect on them.

## Part VI.

CONTINUING my recollections of the main road through the settlement, I will now deal with the portion on the south side from Johnston's corner to the west end. The first edifice was that of Mr J. Johnston's blacksmith's shop. Mr Johnston, after Working for about four years in Anderson's foundry and engineering Works at Christchurch, commenced business on his own account in Rangiora in 1863. His first smithy was on the opposite side of the road, Where Mr E. B. P. Brown's shop now stands. After carrying on there for about two years he made a wise move to the corner which ever since has borne his name. Young as I was at the time, I recollect joining a number of other laddies in hunting through a heap of old iron left by Mr Johnston, and carrying away many childish treasures for our play hours. The first smithy at the corner was a very small building, but it was not long before Mr Johnston's expansion of business demanded larger premises. Two or three additions were made, one being an engineering shop. Eventually the buildings were either demolished or shifted back to give place for the handsome block of shops now occupying the corner. Mr Johnston's residence Was close to his business place, and his nearest neighbours Were Mr and Mrs Thos. Keir, Whose house, built about the year 1866, was some years later removed to Ivory Street and is now occupied by Mr Halfacre. Next came the residence of Mr Hugh Boyd, who, coming to Rangiora in the year 1864, was Mr Keir's partner in the firm of Boyd and Keir, which for many years was the principal firm of builders and contractors in North Canterbury, their workshops being at the rear of their residences. Mr Boyd built his house and brought home his bride in the year 1870, and they lived happily together for 54 years, When Mr Boyd joined the great majority, after, like his business partner, who died in 1911, having spent much of his time for the public good. Mr Boyd's residence was removed to make room for business premises, and formed part of his house in Good Street.

A Famous Medicine Bottle. On the site at one time occupied by Mr Keir's house was erected a small building which during its existence was used for many different purposes. At one time it served as a dispensary for a doctor who practised for a year or two in the town, chiefly as Medical Officer for the friendly societies. There was not a very large stock of drugs in the shop, but there was one large bottle that became famous. Members of the friendly societies who called to hwe their prescriptions made up while they waited, used to declare that 75 per cent, of their medicine came out of the large bottle, the contents of which they believed was a mixture of nearly all the drugs in the place, and was in consequence a marvellous cure-all, which with judicious advertising would hwe made a fortune for the young chemist in charge. I myself had experience of the efficacy of the contents of the bottle. Travelling in the south with a friend suffering from a broken arm, who had been supplied With a bottle of medicine at the dispensary as a panacea for ills that might

arise from his injury, at one of the towns where he made a short stay certain of my internal organs registered a painful objection to the water from a high pressure supply. It had a flavour, and after being accustomed to the aqua pura of Rangiora, I was feeling pretty miserable. Fortunately my companion bethought him of his medicine, which he had not used, and, declaring that it came out of the famous bottle, urged me to give it a trial. I did so, and I am bound to say it acted like a charm. Possibly it was a case of faith healing.

Hobson's Choice and a Coo-ee. Hard by Mr Boyd's house there was a shop and dwelling occupied by Mr John Anderson, Who carried on a seedsman's business, with a variety of sidelines, amongst Which Was a livery stable with a nondescript collection of horses. Well do I remember an experience I had with one of his string. It was in the days when the tradesmen held an annual picnic to Hill's Bush, near the Grey River, and the only means of locomotion was by horse and vehicle. On these occasions horses on hire were at a premium, and any animal fit to get about was pressed into service. I considered myself fortunate in hiring one of John's animals, although it was a Hobson's choice, aged and slow of gait. A Yankee Waggonette carrying six was its load, or perhaps overload, and away we started as a unit of a long cavalcade of horses and vehicles in great variety. We had not proceeded very far along the Ashley Road, however, before the horse suddenly livened up, and made a dash from the ranks to a gate and pulled up. Persuaded by the whip, it reluctantly took up the running again, only to repeat the performance at the next gate, and others, subjecting us to derision, jokes, and laughter from our fellow-jointers. We could not understand what possessed the animal until along came a man who, after eyeing it for a few moment, told us that he knew it to be an old butcher's horse accustomed to the collection of orders, and the delivery of meat with a basket, as was the practice in the early days, and we would never get it along unless we followed the butcher's practice of coo-ee-ing at the gates. This we did, with quite satisfactory results. A loud coo-ee and a touch of the whip kept the horse in motion. When we arrived opposite the blacksmith's shop at Loburn, however, the animal made a sudden dash for the doorway, and it would hwe gone ill with those in the front seat of the conveyance, if some horses in to be shod had not partly blocked the entrance. The sagacity of the horse was further proved by the fact of it passing the gates on the return home without an attempt to stop, all business having been done to its satisfaction on the outward journey.

Not Dead But Sleeping. It will be interesting to recall that John had an adventure with a pair of horses when driving a party to the dispersal sale at Cheviot after the Government acquired the estate. The horses were hardly in a fit condition for the hilly portions of the road, and the party had to do a good deal of walking. Arriving at Foster's Cutting, they had not made very far up the steep grade before the team gave out and backed over the side of the cutting, down the slope of which they rolled with the conveyance almost a hundred feet before coming to rest. The members of the party gazed for some time in consternation at the sight below—their chance of reaching the sale with their team being apparently hopeless. The horses were lying perfectly quiet, to all appearances dead, but one of the party (the late Mr James

Marshall) told me that when they got down to them they were found to be sound asleep, worn out by over-exertion. They suffered no injury, and the conveyance was not badly damaged, beyond a broken pole, and further, strange to say, out of a quantity of crockery the party had for camping out, not an article was broken. One commendable business rule had John —on no consideration short of swing life would he allow his horses to be worked on the Sabbath Day. He believed that a horse should hve its day of rest like a human being.

A Perpetual Motion Crank. Next door to Anderson's premises there stood a building designed for a shop and dwelling that had several occupants at different times and of diverse occupations. One of these had the perpetual motion bee in his bonnet, and wasted a lot of time and money over the construction of a queer looking contrivance of wheels and levers which lie declared, when completed, would revolutionise motorpower the world over. However, he came no nearer success than did the man who attempted to lift himself from the ground by hauling on to his own coat collar. There was a small building adjoining the shop of which my only recollection is that the onetime occupier had a sign up on which he announced to the public that he sharpened "Sissers."

A Notable Settler. The residence of Mr Westby H. Percival, father of Sir Westby Percival, at one time Agent-General for New Zealand, came next. Mr Pereival's selection originally extended from Johnston's corner to the boundary of what is now Keir and Thompson's timber yard, and in a southerly direction to Northbrook Creek. The greater part of it was covered with a growth of fine flax, the whole of which he had cleared off at considerable expense only a year before the flax milling industry was established, whereby he might hwe made a small fortune out of the green blade. Mr Percival took an active and very prominent part in promoting the welfare of the district. One of his enterprises was the establishment of monthly fairs on something of the old English lines in one of his paddocks, for the disposal of live and dead stock. Private sales were carried on up to a fixed hour, and then the auctioneer took charge to dispose of the remainder under the hammer. The venture, however, failed to compete successfully with the regular weekly auction sales carried on by Mr W. Buss oil the same site as now occupied by the market yards, and it was soon abandoned.

A Tragic Ending. Mr Percival was' very enthusiastic over the construction of the railway to Rangiora, and being an exceptionally able public speaker, his voice was often heard in advocacy of the line being laid to the township instead of being taken northwards from Kaiapoi via Woodend and Leithfield, as was at first proposed. It was a matter, of deep regret to the whole community that he did not live to see the line officially opened to Rangiora in fulfilment of his oft-expressed hope to do so. His death occurred in a most tragic manner. He had not been in good health for some months, but his end was not expected. On the day the railway was opened— November 5, 1872—just as the locomotive whistle was heard when the first train, carrying the officials and representative men from Christchurch, was approaching the station, he

collapsed in his house, and died of heart failure. It is said that when death overtook him he was at his desk, in the act of writing a letter for publication in one of the newspapers congratulating the people of the town and district on the consummation of the railway project. On the other side of the street almost opposite his home stood the marquee in which the champagne luncheon was held in honour of the important event; but with flags flying at half-mast, and the thought of the persistent advocate of the railway lying dead so close by, the proceedings had a more subdued tone than would have been the case under happier conditions. The site of the Roman Catholic Church and Presbytery was a gift from Mr Percival, and his remains were interred in the cemetery adjoining the churchyard. Mr Percival was a lover of horses and dogs. He owned a pair of ferocious-looking bulldogs, which I have never forgotten. They were a terror to me and other small boys. When we passed the gate they would growl, and at the same time wag their stumpy tails, but Mr Percival would try to dispel our fear of his pets by assuring us that they were quite harmless, and their growl was only one of good-natured recognition. However, when they were growling and tailwagging it was not easy to decide which end of them to believe, so we usually gave them a wide berth. After Mr Percival died his widow removed to Christchurch, where her son Westby, the only child, was being educated at Christ's College, after obtaining a scholarship at Mr C. Merton's School. It is one of my memories of school life marching in the procession, when he was chaired shoulder high round the school playground in honour of his scholastic success.

## Part VII.

THE Percival home, and land whereon it stood, was purchased by the Bank of New Zealand, and offices being added in front, a branch of the Bank was opened there on January 16, 1873. Business was carried on there for about four years until the erection of the handsome premises now occupied at the corner of High and Ashley Streets. Mr Percival's property had been divided by a road, now Percival Street. On the opposite corner to the bank Mr J. J. Robinson, a builder, had his workshop. Here he carried on business from about 1860 until 1882, when he relinquished it, and took up the office of town clerk rendered vacant by the death of Mr C. G. Chapman. Mr Robinson, who was a member of the first borough council, discharged his duties as clerk in a practical manner, but his term of office, like that of his predecessor, was cut short by his unexpected death on June 11, 1885. Close to Mr Robinson's workshop stood the first building used for postal and telegraphic business—a small building constructed of wood, but quite large enough for the requirements for several years, until the whole corner was cleared to make room for the concrete building that existed before the present fine edifice.

A Royal Salute. I recollect an incident that occurred at the corner after Mr Robinson's shop had been cleared away which caused some amusement at the time. The town had been celebrating the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign with spirited loyalty, and well on in the evening a ship's cannon, owned by a local resident, was requisitioned to fire a royal salute, or something akin to it. It was planted at the corner, and, charged with blasting powder provided

by Mr Blackett, it proclaimed the loyalty of the people with no uncertain sound. Mr Blackett, who was taking a prominent part in the proceedings, suggested that, to provide a finale worthy of the occasion and one that would never be forgotten, the cannon should be filled with powder to the muzzle. This was done and the charge well rammed home. The onlookers, fearing that the camion might burst, lost no time in seeking safety at a distance. At first no one could be found venturesome enough to touch off the charge. Eventually, however, a volunteer came forward, and lying flat down and using a long stick with a match at the end, he fired the priming, The cannon responded with a mighty explosion heard all over the town, and certainly Mr Blackett, who had taken refuge under his verandah, was not likely to forget the finale, his shop windows going smack behind him, the glass being cracked from top to bottom.

Next door to the post office Mr Blackett, always keen to get the business part of the town as far west as possible, erected an office and dwelling for the Union Bank of Australia, now occupied by Mr A. P. Strang. The Bank occupied it for a very few years before determining that a more advantageous position would be nearer its business rivals, and a move was made to its present site. After the Bank people vacated the place it was for some years the residence of Dr Gordon, a very clever surgeon, who came to an untimely end, and had his last resting place in the Presbyterian Cemetery, where his monument can be found bearing the true epitaph, "A kindly Scot lies here."

Institute Hall and Library. The next building of any importance was the Institute Hall and Library, which, erected in 1872 and opened in January, 1873, served the purpose for which it was designed for over 52 years and was then destroyed by fire. The fund for providing the building was raised by subscriptions and a bazaar, and a substantial grant—£700 I believe—from the Provincial Council. In those days the Council was very liberal in its "support of libraries and other permanent institutions for the well-being of the community. In some of the North Canterbury libraries there is still to be found many strongly bound volumes donated by the Provincial Council seventy: years ago. It is interesting to note that of the ladies who took an active part in the bazaar only one remains alive, viz. Mrs T. Keir, who is now living at Spreydon, in her 96th year. The library was opened in the Road Board office some months before the hall was built. When the hall was finished it was decided to name it the Rangiora Mechanics Institute, but the centre word was soon dropped and forgotten. The hall proved a great boon to the community. It gave a fillip to musical activities in the district, and was the scene of many interesting events.

A Memorable Meeting. Of all the meetings held within its walls, the most memorable was the one convened to give the candidates for civic honours in the first election of borough councillors an opportunity to voice their aspirations to make Rangiora worthy of the exalted status it had assumed. There were 16 candidates nominated, but two withdrew. The hall was crowded with the men-folk of the town. Being the days when large families kept the mothers busy, and female franchise was not even dreamt of, the fair sex was



represented by only one lady, Mrs J. Horniblow, and certainly her temerity entitles her name to have a place in the archives of the borough. Some of the candidates had well primed themselves with liquid courage, and it was evident from the difficulty some had in mounting the steps to the platform that there was going to be some fun. Mr Blackett, who had already been elected mayor without opposition, took the chair for the first time in his official capacity, and received an ovation.

Candidates' Capability Test. Mr A. H. Cunningham then came to the front, and intimated that as he had taken a foremost part in having the borough constituted, he proposed a list of questions which the candidates would be called upon to reply to as a test of their capability for office. The list of questions is worth reproducing as indicative of some of the matters exercising the minds of the burgesses. They were as follows:

- (1) Is the formation of the borough a right or wrong step?
- (2) Is the present closet system right or wrong? If wrong how do you propose to deal with the closets?
- (3) How do you propose to maintain a supply of clean water?
- (4) What is your opinion of existing nuisances that need removing?
- (5) Would you remove pig styes, stable manure heaps, or decomposing matter from the neighbourhood of dwelling houses?
- (6) Do you see any needed alterations in the arrangements of the saleyards?
- (7) Are public lamps required?
- (8) What official staff is required, and at what cost?
- (9) Would you advocate a letter delivery?
- (10) Do you consider a steam power fire engine a necessity?

Mr Cunningham might have very aptly added a final question, as to whether each candidate was in a fit condition to walk a chalk line. Mr H. Boyd was the first called upon to speak, and made a good impression with a speech full of common sense and practical ability that marked his future career as a Councillor and Mayor. The next speaker was Mr W. A. Burt, who set a notable example of brevity of speech. "Mr Chairman and Gentlemen," he said, "if elected I will do the best I can in the interests of the Borough." This declaration of his willingness to offer himself as a sacrifice on the altar of civic service was loudly applauded. William then gazed around as if search of some remarks he had intended to make, but which had been widely scattered by the applause, and failing to find them, gave a smile broad enough to cover the whole audience, then bowed gracefully and returned to his seat amid uproar.

Mr G. Cone, who had been in the opposition ranks, but was now anxious for office, followed with a promising little address, which he prefaced by declaring, that he had no eloquence of speech, but earnestly wished that he had "the brains of those newspaper fellows who put such beautiful things in the papers," then he could speak. Mr J. Johnston, who confined himself to a speech that occupied about two minutes, frankly admitted that he was opposed to the formation of the borough, but was now prepared to "make the best of a very bad job." Another candidate, Mr W. White, brought down the house by voicing his opposition to street lamps, except one near the railway station yard, on the ground that they would be "too costly." He concluded by appealing for a "push over the stile" on election day.

Wine Was a Mocker. Two or three of the candidates who had placed their trust in strong drink as a panacea for stage fright, or as an aid to eloquence, experienced the truth of the Biblical dictum that "wine is a and their actions and speech gave cause for much hilarity. One of these commenced his speech by announcing that he was ready to do his bit with "body, soul, and attitude." He was certainly already fulfilling his promise as to attitude, whatever he might have meant by it as a qualification for office, for his legs were giving him trouble, and he was in danger of falling off the platform. Considering his condition, strange to say, he had evidently been most impressed with a water question, for, after a few incoherent remarks, he exclaimed, "Gentlemen, what we want in this town is something flowing through the streets," at the same time illustrating this, the one and only plank of his platform, with a downward wave of his arm which came perilously near to overbalancing him over the front of the stage. A facetious individual in the audience suggested that beer would best supply the urgent flowing need, but the candidate, taking this as a reflection on his sobriety, became truculent, and after declaring that if elected he would do the best he could for himself, he closed his address in a manner unprintable.

Another candidate who had been dozing during part of the meeting was with difficulty prompted to rise when his turn came to speak. He experienced some trouble in getting to his feet and gaining his equilibrium, but presently venturing forward, he made his way in an uncertain manner across the stage - and brought up against the wall. After gazing at the wall in an astonished way for a few moments, amidst a gale of laughter from the audience, he turned and made back to his chair, from which safe haven he was heard to say that he had a section in the place and would do his best on the Council. Mr E. R. Good, also offered an excuse for his youthfulness, made his maiden public speech. It was about the best effort of the evening, giving promise of the ability for office which he afterwards proved to possess during a long period of valuable civic service. Two or three of the other candidates gave practical addresses, and the remainder followed Mr Burt's example of brevity.

The Election. Excitement ran high on polling day. Cartoons and skits gave the proceedings a merry turn, and good humour prevailed throughout the day. There were 255 electors on the roll, and despite strenuous efforts to get all to the polling booth, only 200 recorded their votes. Some of the absentees had

not been in favour of the incorporation of the borough, and refused to hwe anything to do with it. There was plural voting in those days based on property value, which gave some ratepayers as many as five votes, hence the result of the poll did not give any correct idea of the number of voters who supported each candidate. Mr C. G. Chapman, who had been appointed acting town clerk, discharged the duties, of returning officer and duly announced the result of the poll as follows, A. Burt 172, G. Cone 160, J. Johnston 156, F. Thorne 150, J. J. Robinson 142, W. White 115, H. Boyd 109, E. R. Good 103, J. Luxton 91 (elected), J. Lilly 77, S. Stephens 76, B. Ellis 70, J. Wheeler 46, L. Hunnibell 37. Some attributed Cr Burt's success to his brevity of speech, others to his captivating smile and elegant bow, but I think the true cause was the fact that he had a livery stable at the time, which gave him the advantage of a better equipment to round up the electors and speed them to the poll. There is generally a surprise where a large number of candidates put up for election, and in this case it was the rejection of Mr John Lilly, Who had been a useful and popular man in the community, being superintendent of the Fire Brigade at the time. It was supposed that he would command the support of the larger voters, and he probably lost votes through being regarded as a certainty.

The next incident of historic interest was the entertainment by the Mayor of the newly-elected Councillors, the unsuccessful candidates, members of the Road Board and their friends, at dinner on election night, when a very jolly time was spent. The Ven. Archdeacon Dudley proposed the toast of "his Worship the Mayor." Mr Blackett also gave a civic ball some weeks later to celebrate the constitution of the Borough. Wanted, a Corpse But to hark back to the Institute Hall. I am reminded of an amusing incident that occurred at a public meeting held in 1884 to form a rifle corps, at the time of the excitement caused by the fear that Russia had sinister designs on India. One of our leading citizens who claimed to possess a greater knowledge of military matters than most of his fellow townsmen owing to having at one time donned the Queen's uniform in some other part of the colony, ascended the platform to do his bit towards arousing the loyalty of the audience, and a thirst for the blood of the Russians. He opened his speech in an impressive manner befitting the gravity of the foreign situation: "Mr Chairman and fellow citizens, our nation is in danger, and we must have a corpse in this town. I don't care whether it is a corpse on horseback, or a corpse on foot, but a corpse we must have." The speaker was a picture of perplexity when a hearty burst of laughter greeted his urgent demand for a corpse to hell) save the nation in its time of peril, and I am afraid the only impression he made on the minds of the audience was his comical slip in pronunciation.

## Part VIII

CONTINUING my recollections of the Institute Hall, there is another incident that occurred within its walls worth relating. It was a

Remarkable Exhibition of Will Power. Professor Carr, a well-known and very able lecturer on phrenology, mesmerism, and kindred subjects, was giving an

address, and was illustrating it with a phrenological delineation (feeling bumps it was popularly termed) of the head of a prominent local educationist, when in strolled a man who gave evidence of having imbibed a spot too much. He was over six feet tall and very powerfully built, well known locally as dangerous to interfere, with. He was always ready for a scrap, and bore the evidence of one of his engagements in the shape of a large scar on his forehead, the result of a bottle being smashed on his head. Standing in the centre of the hall, he called out, "Tell us if the old chap likes his beer," referring to the man whose head was being operated on. The Professor told him to keep quiet or he would have to go out. The man, however, repeated his question in a defiant way with an additional insulting remark. Professor Carr then ordered him to leave the hall or he would put him out. The man became truculent and dared the Professor or anyone else to attempt to put him out. Thereupon Professor Carr quietly stepped from the platform and advanced towards the man, who put himself in a fighting attitude. It was a tense moment in the room, and two or three persons rose from their seats ready to go to the Professor's assistance. However, he did not require any help, for on reaching within two paces of his would-be assailant, he steadily gazed into his eyes. Slowly the man's arms dropped to his sides, and although he was anything but a coward, on being quietly ordered by the Professor to go out, he turned and, with head down, slunk out of the hall like a whipped cur. Admiration of this remarkable exhibition of will power by the Professor won him a hearty round of applause from those who witnessed it, and a full house for his second lecture the next evening. An amusing incident at a public meeting in the hall is worth a little space. The Government had introduced into Parliament a Bill dealing with the noxious weeds nuisance. After the first reading the measure was circulated amongst A. and P. Associations and other farmers' organisations for comment. At the time, Mr Malcolm Macfarlane was president of the Northern A. and P. Association, and he convened a meeting of farmers for a Tuesday afternoon. Being market day, and the matter at issue an important one, the hall was full. In the audience there was a farmer who personally gave his barber very long periods of leisure; his head being usually Covered with about two years' growth of hair, billowing down over his coat collar. The meeting was well under way when up rose the farmer in question and made a few observations. Then a wag at the back of the hall called out, "Mr Chairman, there is a very serious omission from the Bill that should be drawn attention to." "Well," said the chairman, "let us hear what it is, and we will pass it on to the Government." "It is this," said the facetious one, "a clause is needed to compel farmers to visit the barber's at least once a year, otherwise, as in the case of the previous speaker, there is a grave danger of the seeds of noxious weeds collecting in their hair, and being scattered therefrom over their neighbours' fields. I move, Sir, that a clause as suggested be sent forward to the Government." The motion was promptly seconded and carried with laughter and applause, during which the hirsute one rose and glared down the room in search of the person who had treated the "glory of his manhood" with such unseemly levity. With his shaggy head of hair he looked for all the world like a lion at bay.

Adjourned by Wattle Seeds. Yet another meeting is perhaps worth recalling as an instance of a few harmless-looking wattle seeds dispersing the audience almost as quickly as an alarm of fire would have done. It was a public meeting convened by the Borough Council, soon after the Borough was formed, to discuss some important local matter, and the hall was full. The Mayor (Mr H. Blackett) was in the chair, and he was supported by a full body of councillors. Business had proceeded for about half an hour when some lads, in a back seat took a hand. It is known that the seeds of a certain variety of wattle when crushed and moistened with water produce a smell so nauseating as to be unendurable. The lads put a quantity of these seeds in action, and the result was electrical. The people in the back seats stood not upon the order of their going, but went for the fresh air with one accord. As the noisome smell floated up the hall the stampede continued, much to the perplexity of the chairman and the lesser lights on the stage. Suddenly it reached the olfactory nerves of those on the stage, and their perplexity vanished as quickly as they did behind the scenery en route to the back door. Mr Blackett stood his ground for a minute or two and shouted to the police to arrest the person who had broken rotten eggs in the room. Thus, on the motion of the wattle 'seeds, the meeting was adjourned sine die. To pass on, next door to the hall for several years there was a wheelwright's workshop owned by Mr B. Ellis. In (place of it we have now the fine avenue, planted by Dr Baber, leading up to the front of Dr Will's residence. Next came Mr L. Hunnibell's dwelling and bootmaker's shop, still in existence and occupied by the second generation of the family. Mr Hunnibell came to Rangiora directly after landing at Lyttelton from the ship *Balisima* in November 1864, to settle near the Merton family, to which he was related. He commenced business as a bootmaker in a small sod house which stood at the junction of what are-now Victoria and Brook Streets. Amongst his early manufactures was my first made-to-measure pair of boots, ready-made Cookhams from Good's store being my previous footwear. I never forgot that after Mr Hunnibell put his rule over my foot he remarked "This boy bids fair to have a good share of the colony under his feet when he grows up." I regarded this as a compliment of which, as a small boy, I was very proud, but in after years altered my opinion when a No. 9 shoe pinched my toes. This first pair of boots commenced a valued friendship with- Mr Hunnibell which lasted until he entered the "quiet haven of us all" nearly fifty years later. From the time we first became acquainted he never met me without a smile and kindly greeting. In my boyhood it "was usually: "Well, Charles, my boy, how are you?" and being thus noticed by a grown-up made me feel that I was something of a man. This is one feature of the psychology of the child worthy of note. Speak to the children when you meet them, and they will quickly respond with a smile, and go on their way elated at the experience of a grown-up having noticed them. Practice this and you will prove the pleasure to be mutual. In proximity to his own premises Mr Hunnibell erected a residence which was occupied by Dr W. A. Burrows, one of our medicos of the seventies. The doctor was short and podgy, and although but just over 50 years of age was slow on his feet, and was also near sighted. Nevertheless he was experienced and skilful in his profession, and his practice included the care of the Friendly Societies. In regard to his near-sightedness, the story was told that on one occasion he entered the bedroom of a lady patient, and toddling

up to the bed he peered at the foot of it, and exclaimed in a cheerful tone, "Well, how are you today. Much better, I am sure, by the look of your face." "But, doctor," interposed the nurse, "that's the foot of the bed. Mrs S 's face is at the other end. We have turned the bedstead round since you were here last."

A Nudist Incident. I had a never-to-be-forgotten and most disconcerting experience with the doctor. T was undergoing examination in his waiting room for admission to the Oddfellows' Society, and his overhaul being a very thorough one, I was showing altogether too much birthday suit to receive company, when the doorbell rang. The doctor, who was sitting on a couch close to the door, on the spur of the moment and without rising, threw it wide open. He failed to give a thought to my undressed condition, or to give me time to protest. At the door stood a lady, whether young or old I was too confused to notice, but she did not fail to notice me, and signified so with a shriek. Without giving myself time even to blush, I grabbed some of my garments, and fled through a near-by door which might have led into Mrs Burrow's drawing-room for aught I knew to the contrary. Fortunately, however, I found a haven of safety from female eyes until the doctor announced the deck was clear. He apologised very handsomely for having put me on exhibition, saying that for the moment he entirely forgot me although I was standing in front of him. "There is no doubt you forgot me," I remarked to the doctor, "but I am sure of this—that the lady will never forget me." To save myself from any future embarrassment I did not seek the name of the lady.

An Accident to the Doctor. The Doctor met with an accident which came near ending his career. He had a very fine horse which a groom drove when on his rounds in a gig. They were coming from Christchurch one evening by way of Perceval Street, and when near the intersection of Queen Street the horse took fright and bolted. Dashing into the front of Blackett's shop, it became detached from the gig and continued its mad career towards home. The doctor and groom were thrown out of the gig, and it looked as though both were badly hurt. I happened to be on the spot, and with others went to the Doctor's assistance. He appeared to be unconscious, and we were hurriedly discussing what was best to be done with him, when he suddenly became very much alive, and cussed us pretty roundly for a parcel of fools. "What have to do is to take me home," he ordered. We obeyed, and also helped the groom, who escaped without any broken bones. His concern was the horse, and on making a search we found it in a nearby garden quietly cropping some grass. At first it appeared in the semi-darkness to be all right, but on closer examination we were shocked to find that one of its front feet was hanging to the leg only by a piece of skin, the limb having been all but severed at the hock. Nothing could be done but to shoot the poor animal without delay. Much to the surprise of all, the Doctor made a quick recovery from his misadventure, his injuries not proving so severe as anticipated. Mrs Burrows died while in Rangiora in February 1881, and the Doctor joined her in the great beyond in September of the following year. Their graves are in the Roman, Catholic Cemetery.

The Jubilee Well. Continuing westward, I must not pass over King Street without a reference to the one and only failure in public enterprises in the Borough. A matter that often cropped up in the early days of the Borough was the question as to whether an artesian water supply could be obtained, mainly to flush the water channels. It was known that on the lower level country between the Cam stream and the sea, wells had been sunk to a depth of much less than 100 feet, and were giving a good overflow supply. It was the celebration of the golden jubilee of the reign of Queen Victoria in 1887 that brought the matter to a head. It was decided to hold a carnival to raise funds for providing a permanent memorial of the event, and that the memorial should take the form of an artesian water supply for the borough. The carnival proved a great success, and a substantial sum was raised. It was then agreed to proceed with the sinking of the well at the east corner of King and High the generosity of the public and the coffers of the council being relied upon to provide further funds expected to be required to strike the artesian strata. A jubilee well committee was formed, and a subscription list was opened, but the Borough Council refused to subsidise the money raised. Eventually the Council took over the project and agreed to subsidise by £2 every £1 raised by subscriptions. It was not however till June 1891 that Mr Job Osborne, the most successful well sinker of the day, commenced a contract to sink a six-inch well at a charge of £2/10/- per foot similar to several he had put down in Christchurch. The progress of the work of sinking the pipe was very slow. Loose shingle was struck at a depth of 4 feet below the surface of the ground, and water at 9 feet. As foot after foot of the pipe went down, finally reaching a depth of 220 feet, the same conditions prevailed, loose shingle all the way, with the water from the Ashley and probably the Waimakariri percolating through it without any solid strata to hold the water down and give the pressure necessary for an artesian overflow. In September at the depth above stated, the bottom of the pipe gave way, and the Council then proposed either to withdraw the six-inch pipe or sink a 5 inch pipe inside it. However, a meeting of ratepayers decided that no further money should be spent on the project, and as a finish to the unsuccessful experiment the town clerk, Mr M. Amy, who had not been very favourable to spending so much of the Council's funds on what he thought would be a failure, lost no time in driving a plug in the pipe and burying it up. The process of sinking the pipe was for some time watched with curiosity by small crowds of people who had little else to do, but the work soon became so monotonous as to be of little interest. There was one day of excitement, however, when word flashed through the town had been struck in considerably quantity. The colour certainly warranted the report, but it turned out that a practical joker had dropped a quantity of brass filings down the pipe during the night. The acid test soon proved the baseness of the metal. For some years the spot where the pipe was driven was marked by a depression in the footpath, and it is still noticeable by the roughness of the path where filling was put in. The amount the failure cost was over £400.

## Part IX & Part X

HAVING in previous articles covered the main road as far as what is now King Street, the next place to be noticed was the Presbyterian Church. The

Presbyterian cause in Rangiora was at first connected with the Kaiapoi charge, the people meeting for worship in the Oddfellows' Hall under the ministry, of the Rev. William Hogg. Time came, however, when the folk felt that they should possess a church, in common with the other religious denominations in the township. In consequence of this the four Johns of the congregation—Messrs John Johnston, John Macfarlane, John Sinclair, and John Duff—with Mr T. Keir and Mrs Sinclair, met one evening at the Junction Hotel, of which Mr Sinclair was proprietor, and as an outcome of their deliberations a project to erect a church was launched, and carried to a successful issue, the building being opened and dedicated under the name of John Knox Church on September 15, 1872, with a real Scotch soiree. All those who took a leading part in the gathering have crossed the great divide with the exception of Mrs T. Keir, who, I have before mentioned, is now residing at Spreydon, at the age of 95. It was not till 1880 that the congregation became a separate charge from Kaiapoi, with a resident student minister.

**A Restricted Psalmody.** For several years after the Scotch folk first gathered for worship in the hall the services were conducted on strictly Presbyterian lines, and nothing but the Psalms of David and a few paraphrases were sung to a rather restricted collection of tunes, dear to the hearts of those who had sung them in the churches of their homeland. In the earlier days the singing was led by a precentor and was in very slow tempo. But in the new church a small choir was formed under the co-conductorship of Mr John Johnston, and a small organ was introduced, much to the concern of a few of the aged faithful, who regarded the "kist o' whistles" as an unorthodox innovation. It was some years, however before a hymn book was brought into use.

**A Congregational Singing Competition.** About the year 1887, when the Rev. James McKellar was minister in charge, the singing in the church caused trouble. In the front close to the pulpit the organ and choir had their station, and at the other end of the church there were a few singers having lusty voices, led by a man possessing a baritone voice, but who had an ambition to shine as a tenor. Unfortunately he had a poor ear for harmony, and falling flat on the higher notes, his vocal efforts too often produced very pronounced discords. The trouble was to keep the rival singers at the two ends in time and tune, those at the back seemingly being enthused with the idea that their function was to be a rearguard as it were, to sing the tune a beat or two behind the choir. A protest against this discordant performance proved of little avail, and ultimately the church management committee held a meeting to discuss the situation. The outcome was a decision to plant the organ in the centre of the church, in the hope that it would keep both ends in time and tune. The experiment, however, proved a very decided failure, confusion being worse confounded. At one end the choir was doing its best; in the centre the organist was having the music his way; and at the back the singers were lifting their voices in anything but sweet accord with the other parties. This could not be allowed to go on, so the organ was shifted back to the choir end. As time went on matters showed little improvement. There came a Sunday morning when the minister, who was a violinist of no small ability, and possessed an acute sense of harmony, could stand the discords no longer. The singing was at its



worst when Mr McKellar, in desperation, threw up his arms in the middle of a verse of the hymn, and called out "Stop! Stop." The amazed congregation promptly obeyed, and the minister said in a very emphatic manner: "This excruciating discord in the singing cannot be allowed to go on any longer. I want you people at the back to understand that the church is no place for a singing competition. For goodness sake do endeavour to keep in time with the organ and choir." "Now," he added, "you can go on with the hymn, but I hope my request will be taken in good part, and that you will not transgress again." The minister's drastic dealings with the situation, combined with the departure of the baritone-tenor singer with his flat notes to another congregation, was productive of a marked improvement in the singings and never again was there much cause for complaint.

Angelic Songs Were Swelling. There was another incident in connexion with the singing worth relating. It was summer time and the Seventh Day Adventists on a mission to the town had pitched their tent on the section where the town hall now stands. It was the evening service at the church, and just before the close the Adventists commenced their meeting. They had an organ and several singers with far-reaching voices, which they used double forte. Their melody was billowing in through the open windows of the church when the minister (the Rev. D. J. Steele) announced "We will close our service with hymn 431, 'Hark! Hark! My soul! Angelic songs are swelling.' It is hardly necessary to say that a broad smile went round the church at the congruity of the hymn to the vocal efforts of the tent singers. At the end of the first of the hymn there was the usual pause", and the Adventists were heard still doing their best. Then commenced the second verse, "Onward we go, for still we hear them singing." As can be imagined, the continued congruousness of the hymn and the outside music, renewed the amusement of the congregation, and by this time even the minister was smiling with his flock.

The Beadle Did His Duty. Let me relate another amusing incident that is among my recollections. A minister who had just arrived from Scotland conducted his first service in the new land at John. Knox Church on a Sunday evening. The pulpit was an old-fashioned one raised high from the floor. Above it on each side there was bracketed to the wall a kerosene lamp with a large globe; and below the lamps there were wall ventilators. It was winter time, and when the minister was in the middle of his sermon, a cold draught of air from a ventilator caused the globe on the lamp above it to shatter into small pieces. The caretaker at this time was a rather eccentric character, and no sooner did the globe pop off like a pistol shot than he bounded from his seat, hurried into the vestry, and emerging with a broom made for the pulpit. By this time the minister had recommenced his sermon, but the caretaker had a duty to perform, and he was not to be denied. For the moment, cleaning up the broken glass was in his opinion more important than the sermon, and he acted accordingly, despite a remonstrance from the minister and an assurance that everything was all right. He yanked aside the foot-mat in the pulpit, and set to work vigorously with his broom, crowding the minister into a corner the while: It was a smiling congregation that looked on, and the feeling of amusement was intensified when the caretaker, his duty

accomplished, marched from the pulpit to the vestry, with an air of triumph, carrying his broom on high as an ensign of authority. It is safe to say that the minister never forgot his first service in the new land of his adoption.

A Scot of the Scots. In the earlier days of the church there was connected with the congregation a Scot of the Scots, an outstanding type of the old school. He snuffed in prodigious quantity, sometimes using a small horn spoon instead of a pinch with his fingers. Before sitting down to "taste" the sermon it was his invariable habit, when the minister announced his text, to use his snuff-box, and then to hold it out at arm's length, first on one side of him and then on the other, for anyone so inclined to help himself to a pinch. No one, however, was ever seen to take advantage of his generous gesture. He had a rooted objection to the time in which the Psalms were sung, especially the Old 100th. He advocated the slow measure in which his forefathers sang the old tunes of the metrical psalms. I remember hearing him in Johnston's blacksmith's shop giving a vocal demonstration of the 100th psalm in the tempo he advocated. It would certainly have created a sensation if sung in church according to his idea. I recollect another eccentric individual who was such a slave to his pipe that when the "lastly" of the sermon was reached he would produce his plug of tobacco and knife and charge his pipe ready for the match when he reached the church porch.

Yet another who was a new arrival from the home land .indulged in sucking peppermint lozenges during the sermon; this, I was told, being a very common practice in some parts of Scotland. Certainly the habit would serve to keep him awake, and also those within range of the peppermint aroma.

A Remarkable Runaway. Before passing from the Presbyterian Church it would not be without interest to add a recollection of a remarkable runaway of a horse from the church yard. Mr Malcolm Macfarlane was attending a meeting of Elders, and had tied his horse, harnessed to a light two-seater buggy, to a hitching rail. By some means the animal slipped its bridle and bolted for home. Safely negotiating the gateway, it made across the road and took to the footpath at the corner where the new church stands. At a fast gallop, incredible as it may seem, it kept to the footpath right down to the East Belt. At that period only two shops had verandahs, but there were quite a number of hitching posts along the edges of the footpaths, and a horse trough opposite the Junction Hotel, and it was little short of a miracle that the runaway missed all these. Another marvellous feature was that no one was injured in its mad career. It was dark at the time, but the shops were open, and although people hurried out to see what was happening, no one was hurt, but there were some narrow escapes. The horse continued its gallop home to Coldstream, and wrecked the buggy against a gatepost at the entrance to the drive leading to the house.

Genesis of the Anglican Church. Passing along the road the St. John Baptist Anglican Church is the next building to come under notice. When settlement spread to the north provision was made by the Church of England; authorities for divine worship in private houses or inns. It was conducted by lay

preachers, with an occasional visit from clergymen. From the year 1856 until 1860 the lay preacher at Rangiora was Mr George Thomson. About the year 1858 the erection of the Church England schoolroom at the corner of what is now Victoria and Brook Streets provided accommodation for the services, but a few months later the provision of a church became a matter of serious consideration. The outcome was the commencement of a building on a site of half an acre, the gift of Mr Ingram Shrimpton, on June 29, 1859, and its completion early in 1860. Four years later it was found necessary to enlarge the building owing to a rapid increase in the population through immigration, and after a further lapse of eleven years it was removed to give place to the present handsome church, opened in 1876, but not completed until 1882. It still needs the tower, however, to complete the design of the building.

The First Incumbent Arrives. The pilgrim clergy of the first four ships included the Rev. Benjamin W. Dudley, who, after ten years' ministry in Lyttelton, was appointed to the newly-constituted incumbency of Rangiora. Round about Good Friday, which fell on April 6, 1860, Mr G. J. Leech and three or four other parishioners went as far as Southbrook to meet their clergyman, who had to make his way from Lyttelton to his new parish on foot. In the distance they espied a man floundering through the mud thrown out on the roadway from the large drain recently made from Southbrook to Flaxton. As he drew nearer they found the wayfarer to be their pastor, but only recognisable by his clerical collar and bell-topper, the rest of his habiliments being smothered with mud. On Easter Sunday Mr Dudley was formally instituted to the cure, and the new church was consecrated on April 25. The Rev. (afterwards Archdeacon) Dudley remained in charge of the parish for over 27 years, and endeared himself to his parishioners, and people of the place generally, irrespective of denomination, by his kindness and thoughtfulness for others. Numbers of instances of his generosity could be given, one being the gift of four acres of land on which the present Vicarage stands. He built his own parsonage soon after settling in Rangiora, and it was regarded as the finest residence in North Canterbury at the time. Its destruction by fire, and the tragedy of the Archdeacon's daughter's death through burns received in a futile attempt to save the lives of her two favourite dogs, will be within the memory of many of the old residents of the town.

In my next article I will relate some more incidents in the pastorate of the Ven. Archdeacon.

## Part XI.

IN closing my last week's contribution I promised some further incidents in the career of the Ven. Archdeacon Dudley. First I would say that he had a deep sense of duty in respect to his pulpit ministry. It mattered not to him whether the church was almost or entirely empty on week days set apart for worship; he would go through the service from A to Z, not omitting the address. In proof of this, let me relate an incident told me by the late Mr F. Gulliver-Cradwick. His father, Mr James Gulliver, was vergier in the very early days, and his son Fred occasionally relieved him of the duty of ringing the

church bell. It was a saints' day. It was also the Oddfellows' anniversary sports day, and although Fred rang the bell, when he peeped into the church and saw it was quite empty, he made off to the sports. The next day the Archdeacon chided him for not attending the service, saying that he had delivered an address specially prepared for young people, which he was sorry Freddy had not stopped to hear.

An Experiment in Church Finance. The Archdeacon became much concerned at the large number of threepenny pieces the collecting bags yielded on Sundays, and he conceived what he hoped would prove a remedy. His plan. Was to impound all the small coins with the idea that when they became scarce, those of larger value would be substituted. There being no banks in the place at the time, from Which new supplies could be drawn, the nimble threepenny became scarce, but alas for the Archdeacon's optimism, the bags became burdened With coppers, With not a few buttons amongst them, and the sum total of the collections materially decreased. Regretfully the Archdeacon had to release his cornered coins. An Empty Offertory Plate Another story in connexion with the church collections was told me by the erstwhile verger's boy. One stormy Sunday only the verger, his son, and one other person, Mr- James Barker (builder of the first church) Were present at the morning service. When the collecting plate (plates had been substituted for bags) was handed to Mr Guilder he dredged his pockets for a coin in vain. His boy, too, was penniless, but hopefully he made for the remaining Worshipper, only to be halted by a vigorous shaking of the head, to indicate that he, too, had empty pockets. Disconcertedly Mr Gulliver handed the empty plate to the Archdeacon, who after gazing at it with a solemn face for a few moments, produced a half-crown from beneath his surplice, being probably a shilling for each adult and sixpence for the boy, and placed it on the plate before carrying it to the altar.

His Face Belied Him. In the latter part of his ministry, Archdeacon Dudley became a very pronounced Prohibitionist, and in this connexion used to tell a good story against himself. The Archdeacon had naturally a florid complexion, which deepened very perceptibly when he became earnest of speech. One day he was at the bedside of a sick man to whom he was speaking earnestly when the patient suddenly interrupted him, exclaiming "Hold on a minute, Mr Dudley. I want to know whether it is true that you are a total abstainer." "Certainly it is true," replied the Archdeacon, "but why do you ask me?" "Well," said the man, "I want to tell you that your face belies you."

Jonah Swallowed the Whale. There is another story told, that one Sunday afternoon the Archdeacon was out on some errand of mercy when he encountered a tow of lads sitting on the fence of the corner section Where the Presbyterian Church now stands. He seized the opportunity to say a kindly word in season to the young fellows, When one of them said, "Mr Dudley, do you believe everything in the Bible." "I most certainly do," replied the Archdeacon. Then said the lad, "Do you mean to say, Sir, that you believe that Jonah swallowed the whale?" "I do," replied the Archdeacon. "I firmly believe it." There was a burst of laughter from the lads which bewildered the

Archdeacon, and he asked why they treated his reply with levity. "Well," said the spokesman, "if you believe that Jonah swallowed the whale, you must have a swallow as big as Jonah's to take it in," It suddenly dawned upon Mr Dudley how nicely he had, colloquially speaking, "been had," and it spoke well for his sense of humour that he laughed as heartily as any of the lads. One morning I had occasion to call on the Archdeacon, and on nearing the house in the carriage way, I was puzzled to see him trotting round the lawn holding his handkerchief at arm's length above his head. I thought it was probably physical exercises he was engaged in, but when he caught sight of me he explained that he was trying to find out the direction the Wind Was blowing. There was a light breeze from the east at the time, but his handkerchief, as far as I could see, was showing the Wind to be what our Weather prophets term "variable."

The Old Grey Mare. There are people still in Rangiora who will remember the Archdeacon's old grey horse, the name of which has escaped my memory, although well known when he jogged along our roads. I can picture with my mind's eye the Archdeacon doing a round in his buggy, with his man, Mr James Barford, at the helm. The old steed Would be stepping it out at about five miles an hour, and every now and again, to keep it from going to sleep, Mr Barford Would give it a gentle touch with the whip, which it acknowledged with an upheld fore and aft like a rocking horse, but firmly adhered to the speed limit of its own fixing. Mr Barford's son George told me that on one occasion, When he took his father's place as driver, he made a great effort to get the old horse to increase its pace, but Without wail. At last, forgetting the Archdeacon at his side, in disgust he cursed it in language that would have been more in keeping With bullock punching. "Suddenly," said George, "it flashed into my mind what a dreadful sin the old horse had led me to commit, and I went hot all over. The old gentleman, however, let me down light. He uttered but the word 'George!' in expostulation, but in such a shocked tone that I felt it was quite enough to keep me from falling from grace again within his hearing." In his Walks abroad the Archdeacon generally had his pockets full of little books, chiefly of a religious character, which he distributed irrespective of the denomination of the recipient. I have one of his books he gave me at Christmas time, autographed with his good wishes. "The History of the Church" is its title.

Five years after the present church was opened the Ven. Archdeacon resigned the parish to give place to a younger man, his ministry terminating on December 29, 1887. He remained in harness, however, taking charge of the Fernside Church until the morning of Sunday, April 28, 1892, when he died suddenly of apoplexy while preparing to go to his church to hold service. He had reached the ripe age of 86 when he went to his reward.

A Famous Church Choir. In the earlier years of its history, St John's Church had a Canterbury reputation for the excellence of its choir music. Mr Charles Merton, first headmaster of the Church of England School, Was often termed the father of music in the province, and by the time the church was opened he had formed a choir to lead the singing. In a newspaper report of the opening

special reference was made to the singing under Mr Merton as being an outstanding feature of the services. Mr Merton found several good voices and fair knowledge of music among the settlers; he had also some promising young singers amongst his school boarders. With the material at command, combined with his unbounded musical enthusiasm, he trained a choir that became famous for its proficiency, one of its strong points being the excellence of its chanting. I have been told that choirmasters came from Christchurch to hear the choir chant. With the object of raising funds to provide an organ for the church, the choir, with members of a glee class Mr Merton also conducted, and the help of two or three soloists and some orchestral players from Christchurch, rendered "The Messiah" and other oratorios to packed houses, and a substantial sum was the result, which with private subscriptions enabled the church authorities to procure the present organ. Mr Merton gained his eminently successful results by exercising the strictest discipline at practices. It was his custom to have the hymns for the coming Sunday sung morning and afternoon in the day school, and thus all the scholars became familiar with them. One of my recollections is seeing Mr Merton with a large music book under his arm marching on Sundays to church at the head of a procession of his school boarders. I may add there is still in our community the only resident living member of Mr Merton's choir and glee class; and she is still, I believe, one of the most regular attendants at the church services.

A Community Bell. I am pretty sure that few, or any, beside myself are aware of the fact of the bell at St John's Church being a community one. In many small towns more than one church possesses a bell to call the folk to worship. When St. John's bell was provided, however, it was agreed that it should serve for all the Protestant denominations in the township, - and contributions towards its cost were made. It was arranged to ring the bell for ten minutes, commencing at 10 o'clock on Sunday mornings, to enable people to check their clocks, and prepare for church. The second ringing was timed for 10.45, and was continued for a quarter of an hour, the last five minutes with the double stroke. This arrangement was carried out for many years, but eventually gave place to that obtaining at present, much to the relief, no doubt, of the verger, on whom the duty of ringing the bell devolves.

A Tablet with a History. The tastefully illuminated dedicatory tablet on a wall in the transept of the church has an interesting history, that was published in the newspapers several years ago, but will bear repeating for the benefit of the younger generation and new-comers to the town:—

On the completion of the first church the architects (Messrs B. W. Mountfort and I. Luck) had the tablet prepared and inscribed as follows: "This church, dedicated to the glory of Almighty God in honour of St John Baptist, was commenced on the feast of St Peter, June 29, 1859, and erected by voluntary offering of the parishioners, and by a grant of public money voted by the Provincial Council Session, 10, 1858. "George Thomson, Ingram Shrimpton, churchwardens. Building Committee : George Thomson, chairman, Charles D'Auvergne, James Gulliver, George John Leech, John Rose Brandon, hon.

sec., Smith Howard, Henry Blackett, Samuel Henry Andrews. "Architects, B. W. Mountfort, I. Luck."

The tablet having come to hand from Christchurch, the committee met to decide where it should be placed in the sacred edifice. After some deliberation up spoke one of the members, traditionally said to have been Mr Leech, and certainly characteristic of him: "Look here, I for one don't wish my name made conspicuous in the church for doing what was only my duty. While we have acted on the building committee, there are others who have done as much as we have towards the erection of the church, then why should we be singled out to have our names exhibited on the wall? I vote that the tablet be put out of sight."

This proposal, although somewhat of a bombshell, found favour with a majority of the committee, but as a compromise with those who had scruples about this summarily disposing of the tablet, it was decided that to avoid any of the committee men ever seeing their names displayed on the church wall, it should be faithfully kept out of sight until all had passed over the Great Divide, leaving it to the later generation to place it in the church if they thought fit to do so. The tablet was then solemnly wrapped up, and handed to the chairman, Mr Thomson, for safe keeping. As the years rolled away one after another of the twelve whose names were inscribed on the tablet passed away. On the death of Mr Thomson at a ripe old age, the preservation of the interesting memento of pioneering days devolved upon his eldest son, Mr J. M. Thomson, who was as faithful to his trust as his father had been. Passing Mr Thomson's place one day, he called me in to see a curiosity, which proved to be the tablet. He then told me its history and said that as far as he was aware its existence was entirely forgotten. Not long after this, Mr Thomson died suddenly, and I then told the Rev. F. P. Fendall and Mr G. H. N. Helmore, one of the churchwardens, about the tablet, and I believe they obtained possession of it. Eventually, 47 years after the tablet was put out of sight, death claimed the last of the twelve in the person of Mr Henry Blackett, who went the way of all flesh on July 11, 1907. Very soon after this the tablet had an honoured place in the church, but not the building it was originally intended for.

Further Along the Road. Passing on near the corner of what is now High and White Streets stood a store with dwelling widely known in the early days. The business was that of a general and fancy goods, and was owned and managed by Mrs F. Bean, whose husband, as I stated in a former article, was the second regular mail carrier between Rangiora and Christchurch, serving the settlers in that capacity from the year 1858 to 1863. Adjacent to Mrs Bean's store stood one of the only two fully licensed hotels of the early sixties in the township. It was by name the Rangiora Arms, but commonly called the Rangiora Hotel.

The First Assembly Hall. About the year 1865 the then proprietor, Mr W. Baugh, built, semi-detached from the hotel, the first hall provided in the place for public purposes. It was known as Baugh's Assembly Room, and proved a

great boon to the people in extending the facilities for entertainments, Merton's schoolroom being up to that time the only place that afforded accommodation for public gatherings. Of the entertainments held in the Assembly Room, those that made a lasting impression on my mind were panoramas of the American Civil War, and a diorama illustrating some of Charles Dickens's works. These with an occasional magic lantern entertainment by Mr H. Senger, of Christchurch, in which we saw the ships rocking on the sea, and a mouse running down a sleeping man's throat, were the nearest approach we had in those days to the movies of today. I also remember a Yankee coming to introduce Wizard Oil, which is still on the market. Half-a-crown a bottle he charged, and did a big business to the crowd attracted, I recollect that to show the penetrating power of the oil he poured some into the palm of his hand, and after a few moments it was seen to drop, apparently through the back of the hand. Of course the oil ran between his fingers, but the credulous accepted the demonstration as marvellous, and there was quite a struggle to purchase bottles. Hard by the Assembly Hall Mr J. Siddons, father of Mr Frank Siddons, Ashley Street, plied his calling of a blacksmith, and on a section a short distance beyond, about where Mr W. Smith now resides, there stood the last habitation within what is now the western boundary of the borough. This was a cob house, built by Mr John Lilly for his own occupation. He temporarily covered the roof with canvas, and it was not long before one night a fierce north-west gale blew the roof clean away, leaving Mrs Lilly in bed with her first baby, having only an umbrella to protect her and the infant from rain falling in torrents. With this article I have reached the end of the main road through the township, and I will now have to look in other directions for any further reminiscences.

## Part XII. THE LITTLE BETHEL

THERE is a well-founded rumour that the old Baptist Chapel, the Little Bethel, as they affectionately named it, of the Baptists of the early days, is marked for demolition. I refer to the smaller, or front portion of the church, in which the Baptists of the present, day worship. Amongst the prominent pioneers of the Rangiora settlement were several who held allegiance to the tenets of the Calvinistic Baptist sect. Most of the leaders of the little band of the faithful were members or marriage connexions of the Ivory family, whose head was the Rev. Charles Ivory, for a great number of years pastor of the Baptist Chapel at Costessy, a suburb of Norwich, England. In the circle of this family of colonists were Messrs William and Aquila Ivory and their sisters, Mrs D. Doggett, Mrs W. Stapleforth, and my mother, with their wives and husbands, who arrived from the Old Country in three different ships within the period from October 1855 to December, 1857. It is almost needless to say that, imbued with the deep religious convictions of the father in the Homeland, the family did not fail to assemble themselves together for Divine worship, and their faith, somewhat tinged with sternness in its Calvinistic leaning, helped them in no small measure to meet and overcome the difficulties and hardships incidental to the pioneering days. Until the year 1860 their services were held in cottages fortnightly, led by Mr T. S. Mannering, of the Fernside sheep station, who was a gifted preacher. Several



of their fellow settlers joined them, and when the Oddfellows' Hall was built in the year above-named, it was hired for regularly weekly services on Sunday mornings, and Mr William Ivory then became the leader.

**A Constituted Congregation Formed.** The little band held together informally as a church organisation until the year 1862. This was a red letter year in the history of the Baptists of the settlement. In the original minute book of the chapel, as it was always called, it is recorded that a regularly constituted congregation was formed on October 20, 1862. In the fore-part of the minute book, occupying 18 closely written pages, is set out under the heading "A Plain Statement," twenty-eight articles of faith of a wonderfully comprehensive and deeply religious character, and each article fortified with copious scriptural references. In reading these articles, which are in the handwriting of Mr Mannering, and probably were compiled by him, one is impressed with the conviction that only those persons of a most saintly life and character could possibly adhere to them.

**The First Chapel Members.** Following the articles of Faith is the first minute recorded, which reads: "We, T. S. Mannering, A. Ivory, Ann Ivory, W. Wright, H. Wright, A. Miles, W. Ivory, E. Ivory, M. Gosden, W. Pentecost, F. Pentecost, this day unite together in church fellowship according to the declaration of faith, and church rules in the pamphlet headed 'A Plain Statement.' " The second resolution appointed Brother William Ivory as leader and teacher. In this connexion it may be here noted that a meeting held in the same month three years later it was suggested that the time had arrived when Mr Ivory should have a higher status. Accordingly a motion was carried "That Mr Wm. Ivory be henceforth regarded as Pastor of the. Chapel." However, in the records of a meeting held the following week it is stated that Bro. Ivory would not accept the position of Pastor, but was prepared to act as Teacher or Leader as henceforth.

**Building the Chapel.** Early in the following year (1863), a chapel was built, the first Baptist chapel in Canterbury, and the fifth in New Zealand, the others being two in the Nelson Province and two in Auckland. Strange to say, the only reference in the minute-book to this forward movement is in the records of a meeting held on February 17, 1863, as follows: "Proposed and agreed to by all that the chapel be painted and the floor laid as soon as possible." The section on which the chapel was built was the gift of Mr Wm. Ivory, and he also gave the timber for the building from bush he owned. There was a good deal of labour of love in the construction of the chapel, and it was finished in an excellent style, the whole of the interior being of hand-dressed timber, there being no planning machinery in those days.

**A Remarkable Preacher.** The services were held morning and evening in the summer months, and afternoon in place of evening in winter, when the state of the roads was such as to deter anyone from venturing forth in Sunday best. The morning service commenced at 10.45, a quarter of an hour earlier than in other churches, and under Mr Ivory's leadership, continued well on to 1 o'clock. It is no exaggeration when I say that Mr Ivory was a remarkably able

preacher, and would have ranked amongst the foremost pulpit personalities of his day had he been trained for the ministry. He had a masterly knowledge of the Scriptures, and his commentaries on the portions he read in the services would occupy more time than many of the sermons of the present day. His sermons, delivered without a note, were always well over an hour in length. In my mind's eye I can see him standing on the floor beside the pulpit he for some reason would never enter. With a small Bible in hand he would give out his text. Then, looking the floor, he would say a few words in a meditative way. Then he would look ceiling ward, and add a few more words. Thus he would continue for a minute or two, giving any stranger an impression that he had ill prepared his sermon. Presently, however, he would grip his subject, and continue to expound it with remarkable eloquence to the end. In the heat of summer I have seen some of the women folk using smelling salts, but as a rule Mr Ivory succeeded in holding the close attention of the congregation, with the exception perhaps of the children, who had no place in their young minds for the Calvinistic doctrine of election and predestination which formed the theme of many of the sermons preached.

Introduction of a Clock. The time came when some of the people protested against being kept so long from their Sunday dinners, and the deacons held a meeting to discuss the situation. Mr Ivory was asked whether he could not see his way to devote a little less time to his sermons. "Time!" he exclaimed. "Time has no place in my thought when I am delivering my message. How can you expect me to know how the time is passing? The best thing you can do is to get a clock with a good large dial, and place it on the wall right in front of me; then you may be able to get your dinners a little earlier." Mr Ivory's suggestion was acted upon without delay. The clock was procured, and hung on the wall in a conspicuous position, but while it proved fairly effective, there were occasions when the sermons reached their old time length, Mr Ivory being too engrossed with his subject to notice the clock. It may be noted that, the old timepiece is still doing duty in the church. Baptismal services were occasionally held on Sunday afternoons, first at Bro. Wright's Creek, now known as the Southbrook stream, and afterwards at a swimming pool my father made in his garden.

About the Singing. What about the singing in the little chapel? is a natural question. It was over twenty years, and not till the chapel had lost its original identity, before an instrument was allowed in the place to lead the singing on Sundays. Music of the mouth was declared to be the only legitimate way of conducting the service of praise. A concession was made, however, on the occasion of the annual tea meetings held to commemorate the opening of the chapel. Then the special hymns sung were led by an orchestra of violins, flute, and cello. There was a small church choir with Mr William Breach as leader. It devolved upon him to sound the keynote of the hymn to be sung. This he did with a pitchpipe, a small instrument of wood that could be set to sound any keynote in the musical scale when blown into. The hymn having been announced; the leader would give a toot with his pipe, and forthwith the choir gave voice to the tune selected, the people joining in. Often, unless the hymn had a familiar tune, the congregation had to wait a little until they could catch

the melody from the choir. For several years Isaac Watt's collection of hymns was used, but a change was afterwards made to Gadsby's. As far as I know there was no book of tunes set to the hymns. Sometimes Mr Breach had but two minutes to fit a tune to the hymn announced. Occasionally he failed, and he would say, "We can't manage he, Mr Ivory. You will have to give us another." I recollect that on one occasion an old gentleman who occupied a front seat and who possessed a voice very much the worse for wear, differed from Mr Breach, and he struck up a tune. He got through the first line all right, but when he reached the end of the second line he had exhausted his supply of words and had a bar or two of tune to spare. His collapse provoked an audible titter, but Mr John Sansom came to the rescue with a tune of the right metre, but he had to sing solo two lines before the congregation would venture to join in.

Those Troublesome Crinolines. One thing in connexion with the little chapel that left a lasting impression on my mind was the trouble caused by the enormous crinolines worn by the women. The chapel was too small to allow of much space in the alleyway, and between the seats, and it can be imagined that the hooped contraptions were very much in the way. The dresses would scrape the seats in the alleyway, and to manoeuvre them between the seats was an engineering feat. As well as making an impression on my mind, the crinolines sometimes made a painful impression on my knees. At prayer time the elder folk were seated, but the children had to kneel down. My seat in my very juvenile days was between my mother and another woman, both of whom were in the fashion, and unless I remembered to scrape an opening for my knees I came down on the edge of the steel hoops. There was one compensation—the steel from a discarded hoop made good pea-shooters. A fashion that followed the crinoline was the hustle, described in the Dictionary as a stuffed pad or cushion worn by ladies under the skirt of their dress, the intention being to improve the figure. Fortunately the seats in the chapel had open backs, thus allowing the bustles to protrude at the rear. The bad boys sometimes took advantage of this and used them as a book-rest.

Confession of a Bad Boy. About the boys, and I want you to remember that I was one of them: It can easily be realised that the long services were a great trial to us, and in consequence one's behaviour at times was not of the best. About six of us occupied a back seat, and that gave us scope for a little freedom. One thing we did was to make an inventory in our hymn books of all the boards in the walls and roof of the chapel. At prayer time, to say the least, we were not very reverent, and we gave much concern to Mr Robinson, who I made mention of in a previous article. He made a practice of standing at prayer time with his back to the preacher. By this he had us under his eye, and many a time he had occasion to shake his head at us. Eventually the deacons held a meeting to discuss what should be done with us. The outcome was that we were dispersed about the chapel. I was allotted a seat against the wall right in front. It was, as you may imagine, not a place of honour. I had my uncle Aquila Ivory on one side, and on the other I was almost within arm's length of the preacher. One firing I did was to leave my mark on the wall. In those days boys, and men too, wore their hair in a bob fashion, and when it

required cutting it was not an uncommon practice to put a basin on the head and trim round the edge of it. A copious anointing of the hair with oil was a custom. It was deemed almost a sacrilege if the hair was not well oiled for church. It was a calamity too if the required bottle of almond-scented hair-oil had been forgotten amongst the Saturday night's purchase of necessities. You can guess how I marked the wall.

Bread and Butter Puddings Versus Plum Cake. The annual tea meeting—what an event it was in our young lives. We looked forward to it for weeks, and talked about it for weeks after we had enjoyed it to the full. Aunt Ann made a most delectable bread and butter pudding, rich with currants and raisins, and Aunt Ivory a superb plum cake that would rival Ernest Adams' best, and the two made our choice of tables a most serious business. Usually the pudding scored the majority vote.

The History Continued. But to return to the history of the chapel. Mr Ivory continued his leadership for thirteen years, and then some dissension arose which led him to resign the position. Mr William Sansom was then appointed leader, and he was obliged to take the pulpit to support his voluminous manuscript. His morning sermon, read with deliberateness and much emphasis, was closely written on from thirteen to fourteen sheets of foolscap, and he prefaced it with the names of the eminent Divines from whose sermons he had culled it, but invariably ended by assuring his hearers that "a small portion of it is original." I can vouch for the length of his sermons because it was a practice of we boys to tick off in our hymn-books each sheet as Mr Sansom turned it, and there was many a sigh of relief when number 13 had become a discard and the end was well in view. I have no doubt but that the sermons were of a high order; but it was not the height we were concerned about. Mr Sansom continued to occupy the pulpit for a considerable time, and finally ended his ministry to, I believe, visit the Homeland. Mr Aquila Ivory then for several months acted as leader, reading printed sermons preached by Spurgeon and other noted Baptist pastors. After him the services of Christchurch lay preachers were engaged. One of them, I recollect, had a habit of lifting his voice to a painful pitch and weeping during his sermon. An aged couple who occupied a front seat looked very uncomfortable when the tears were running down the preacher's face. At last one Sunday they could stand it no longer. Up jumped the old man and called to his wife: "Come along, Martha; we have had enough of this." "You're right," said the old lady. "I am sure that man is not fit to be in the pulpit. He has got some sin on his conscience, or he would not hoot and greet as he does." The old couple then departed, while the preacher dried the tears which had so much disturbed them.

A Memorable Meeting. Time came, however, when the condition of affairs became very unsatisfactory, and it was decided to hold a meeting to discuss the future of the chapel. The evening of the meeting arrived, and so did most of the congregation. Just after a hymn was raised to open the proceedings, Mr Ivory, the old leader, who was a trustee of the chapel property and curious to know what the intention was regarding it, but had not been inside the building

since his resignation, quietly entered and took a seat close to the door, only a few at the back being aware of his presence. The opening exercises ended, the congregation settled down for business, but no one seemed to have any desire to speak. Dead silence reigned for fully ten minutes. I was in the exalted seat allotted to me, and beside me sat Brother Aquila Ivory, from whom speech had been expected, gazing at the floor and twirling his thumbs. Suddenly the silence was broken by a voice from the back. It was at once recognised as the voice of their old leader, and its effect was electrical.

“Well, good people,” said Mr Ivory, “you have come together for some purpose or other, but no one seems to know the object of the meeting. There has been a long silence, but may I suggest that you get your Bibles and turn to the Epistle of James, chapter 5, verse 16, and I am sure that if you follow the advice there given, you will find so much to say that you will not get home before midnight.” Bibles were hurriedly produced, and this is what the people read: your faults one to another, and pray one for another.” Dead silence again ensued for a few minutes: then first one and then another slipped out of the door, and within five minutes the meeting was dissolved and all the people were on their way home. Mr Ivory remained in his place and stood smiling while the people passed him. I brought up the rear, and in front of me there was an old lady who stopped in front of him, and, shaking her fist in his face, exclaimed: “You wicked old man, Mr Ivory, to come here and break up our meeting.” Mr Ivory smiled on.

The Chapel Closed. At last matters became so unsettled that services ceased to be held, but for a long time Mr Robinson, who was one of the deacons, to comply with a clause in the title deed of the property, opened the chapel door every Sunday morning for ten minutes, and then closed it again. Finally, as recorded in the minute-book, on June 13, 1883, Messrs W. Sansom, J. J. Robinson, R. Grimwood, and A. Ivory met and decided to offer the use of the chapel to the Rev. C. Dalliston, of Christchurch, to carry on services. The offer was accepted, and from that time the Little Bethel ceased to be the stronghold of the Calvinistic Baptists.

A Cool Incident. The Canterbury Baptist Association then took charge and furnished pulpit supply. One of their preachers created a sensation one very hot Sunday morning. He carried a good share of adipose tissue, and it was evident that he was feeling the heat. Suddenly he stopped in the middle of his sermon, and singling out one of his front seat hearers, said: “Brother, if you will carry on with prayer I will go outside and get cool.” Suiting the action to the word, he left the church, and was seen walking about under the shade of trees in the grounds. When he had cooled off he returned and resumed his sermon.

An Historic Oak. I cannot close without a reference to the fine old oak tree in the chapel ground. It has an interesting little history. In the year 1869 Mr Ivory received from his father in England a packet of acorns which came from an oak tree in the chapel ground at Costessy. From these he reared a number of young trees, and there is this record in the old minute-book: “On Saturday,

August 4, 1872, an oak tree was planted in the chapel ground by John Ivory (Mr Ivory's eldest son) and W. Stapleforth, reared from an acorn grown on an oak tree in the Baptist Chapel ground at Cossey, Norfolk, England. Age of the tree, 3 years." I may note that another of the trees is to be seen in the section in Victoria Street nearly opposite the Catholic Church. It is without doubt the finest specimen of an oak tree in North Canterbury.

Part XXIII.

#### THE FIRST U.M.F. CHURCH IN NEW ZEALAND.

CONTINUING my brief history of the different religious denominations in the town, my first reference this week is to the United Methodist Free Church. To the Free Methodists of Rangiora is credited the erection of the first church of their sect in New Zealand. Amongst the settlers who arrived in 1859 was Mr George Booth, who acquired a section of land on the Woodend Road, adjoining Mr Leech's property. Being an ardent Methodist he lost no time in starting a movement for the provision of a church, and in this he received the support of Messrs G. Watson and J. B. Thompson, new arrivals from Cornwall, the great Methodist stronghold of the Homeland. The three entered into the project with enthusiasm, and before very long they had their church ready for occupation. It was opened with a morning and afternoon service. There is no record as to who occupied the pulpit in the morning, but I have been informed by Mr Samuel Ayers that as a youth he walked from Woodend with his mother to attend the afternoon service, which was conducted by Mr T. S. Mannering, who preached from the text John I, verse 29. The church was also used for a day school, and a cottage was built close by for a teachers' residence. In the early days the principal public schools were all denominational, and they received financial aid from the Provincial Council. The first "Education Ordinance" was passed by the Council in 1857, under which a sum of £2,000 was divided amongst the different denominations for educational purposes. The first master of the Methodist school Was Mr J. Cumberworth, who also conducted the church services. In the following year he left to become headmaster of the Wesleyan School in Christchurch.

For a period of sixteen years the services were carried on by local preachers principally from Christchurch, among whom were J. Aulesbrook, who established the business of Aulesbrook and Co., J. Scott of the firm of Scott Bros., iron-founders, and Professor Ayers. After a few years in Rangiora, Mr Booth entered business in -Christchurch and eventually established the firm of Booth, MacDonald, and Co. Mr James Withers of Southbrook was also among the locals and a notable pulpit figure was Mr J. Sharplin, a bushman, who on extra warm Sundays used to remove his coat and preach in his shirt sleeves. The brothers John, William, and James Seed were also among the prominent active members of the congregation. The church in the earlier years of its existence was the scene of many exciting revival times. One result was that men adjured by the revivalist relinquished smoking and buried their pipes and tobacco. However, the graves were in cases marked with a memorial peg, which served as a reminder of self denial and a ready means of locating

the grave for a disinterment when the influence of the revivalist who had passed on, became weaker than the love of the old briar in the grave.

**New Church Opened.** In the year 1876 a new church was opened with the Rev. H. R. Wilkinson as the first resident minister. It was at the opening of the church that Mr J. T. Withers commenced his long career as an organist, being still in harness at John Knox Church. The church continued to flourish under eight successive ministers until it was closed in 1896 when the union of the Methodist Churches took place. The building was afterwards removed to Southbrook where it is still in use. The original church was sold to Dr. J. B. Downes, who removed it to High Street where it was gutted by fire when in use as the "Record" printing office.

**The Day School.** After Mr Cumberworth left, the school for a short period was in charge of Mr Saunders, and he was followed by Mr W. J. Heath, who carried it on until its close in 1872, when the Provincial Council grants were discontinued, and the New Education Ordinance replacing denominational schools by district schools came into force. The Methodist school was the one I first attended at the age of five years, and I continued there, carrying my shilling fee paid in advance every Monday morning for two years, and then passing on to Merton's School. Mr Heath's teaching was of a rudimentary character, confined to the three R's. Taking him on the whole he was a good sort, but we always stood in fear of his instrument of punishment. This was a long flat ruler he vised on the blackboard, and also, when he deemed it necessary, on that portion of the scholars' anatomy nature seems to have provided for the schoolmaster to thus operate on. A copy book judiciously placed was accredited to be a very present help in time of trouble.

**To See Something Wonderful.** Young as I was at the time there were many happenings that made an impression in my memory. One incident is still very vivid. Our desks were crude affairs compared with those of the present-day. Underneath the top there was a narrow shelf for our slates. Among the scholars there was a boy who was considered rather soft, and one dinner-time he was told that if he could get his head through between the desk and slate shelf he would see something wonderful. The boy got his head through alright, but found it impossible to get it back, his ears being in the way. We tried to tuck them in, but -it was no good, the boy was stuck fast, and he began to cry. Becoming badly alarmed at last, we brought Mr Heath to the rescue. After taking in the situation he first went for his ruler, and while he had the unfortunate boy bailed up he castigated him on the customary position until he yelled for mercy. Then he brought his saw and cut away the shelf, releasing the victim, who was very sore about the ears and elsewhere.

**Roman Catholic Church.** Across the road from the Methodists the Roman Catholics were located. The first Roman Catholic Church was built in the year 1870, on a section the gift of Mr W. H. Perceval, but the parish with a resident priest was not formed until 1877, the spiritual needs of the people being originally attended to from Christchurch, and by the priest stationed at Shand's Track. The Rev. Father Binsfield was the first priest to take charge of

the parish. He was a man of a fine genial personality, a gentleman in every sense of the word, and it was not long before he became beloved of his people, and esteemed by the whole community. He had the reputation of being a church builder and he certainly maintained it in his new parish, for so well did he get on with his congregation that by October 1886 a handsome new church was built. If my memory is not at fault, he was responsible for the erection of other churches in his parish, which covered a Wide area, including Kaiapoi, Loburn, and Oxford. The Presbytery built in 1878 is also a monument to Father Binsfield's zeal, and the devotedness of his flock.

When the new church was in occupation the old building was converted into a schoolroom, and a day school was opened with 32 scholars With Sisters in charge. Although the church had accommodation for 400 people, about 15 years ago it was found necessary to enlarge it. At the same time the school was enlarged, the number of scholars being increased to about 90. Twenty-nine years ago the very fine convent Was built, and in a much more recent year the Celtic Hall Was provided for recreation purposes, the land on Which it stands being part of the site of the Methodist Church, and the hall the Church of England Old Girls' schoolroom brought down from High Street. The costly projects carried out by the congregation amply proves the church to be in a flourishing condition, and all working in harmony under the Rev. Father Leen's care.

A Great Mission. Such in tabloid form is the history of the Roman Catholic Church. My earliest recollection of the church was a great mission conducted by the Rev. Father Henneberry, a missionary from the United States, some time in the middle seventies. The mission, which extended over eight days, was a central one for North Canterbury, and the church being much too small to accommodate the large congregations expected, one end of the building was taken out and a large canvas-covered addition was made. The Mission opened on a Sunday and I, with other boys, led by curiosity, was among the congregation tightly packed in a seat in the middle of the church. Time came when hunger made us sorry we were there, for the proceedings commenced with Mass at 11 o'clock, and did not end till close on 2 o'clock. My clearest recollection of the service was the demonstration given by the missionary of the most fruitful way of taking up a collection. A special dais had been erected for the altar. When the time came to take up the offertory, Father Henneberry standing on the dais watched the collectors for a minute or two, and then ordered the plates to be brought to him. He took them in his hands and after gazing at the contents for a moment, exclaimed, "What a collection for a Catholic church! Why there are even sixpences on the plates. We must do better than this. I will show you how to take up a collection." Stepping down from the dais he started round with a plate, first calling out for nothing less than half-crowns, but pounds for preference. An anxious dredging of pockets ensued, and he was soon back with his plate loaded with coin and notes, and turning it out in the dais he sallied forth again and brought in another full plate. Verily his demonstration was a masterly one.



Throughout the week the township, morning and evening, was a moving scene, with the conveyances loaded With Catholics from all parts of the district going and coming. All but necessary work at the homes of the people was suspended by order of the missionary, and the church was packed from day to day. Father Henneberry was an out and out temperance advocate, and before the end of the mission he had practically all his hearers pledged to total abstinence from intoxicants. To publicly demonstrate this they had to march in procession through the township each wearing a broad blue ribbon sash. The procession was a sight that greatly encouraged those who were working in the establishment of the temperance movement in the place. Many years ago when in my capacity as Mayor I was presiding at a reception of the Very Rev. Dean Hyland on his return from a visit to Great Britain, I reminded the audience of the mission and the temperance pledges they made, and asked for a show of hands by those Who had kept the pledge. Alas, not a hand went up, although I knew a few of the old folk who had donned the blue sash were there. Later in the evening an old lady smilingly confessed to me that she was in the procession but she couldn't hold up her hand. Mentioning Dean Hyland reminds me that when in his study one day he pointed to a small framed card and remarked that he valued it above everything else in the room. "Take a look at it," he added. I found it to be a total abstinence pledge signed by him many years before, and which he assured me he had never broken.

A Bishop's Thoughtful Act. Laying the foundation stone of the new church built in 1886 was a ceremony that brought together Catholics from all parts of the parish, and a special train conveyed a large party from the city. The ceremony was conducted by his Lordship Bishop Moran of Dunedin, there being no Bishop in the Christchurch Diocese at that time. I am referring to this event to recall an act of thoughtfulness on the part of the Bishop that has always remained green in my memory. It was an excessively hot cloudless day, and with me at the reporters' table were Mr J. L. Wilson of the "Press" and Mr H. Turner. For the ceremony of blessing the foundations of the building the whole assemblage formed a procession, and marched round it. We had removed our hats, but When the Bishop, who was leading, came abreast of our table, he halted the procession and, coming to us, said: "Gentlemen, it is dangerous for you to sit in the hot sun with your hats off; please put them on." We thanked him, and assured him that we did not think we would come to harm. The Bishop then with a smile said, "I am really concerned about your safety. May I ask you as a personal favour to put on your hats." It was uncomfortably hot, and certainly we felt very grateful to the Bishop for his kindly consideration for us, so graciously expressed; and thanking him, of course we complied with his request. He thereupon thanked us with another smile and returned to the procession, the people in the meanwhile having been interested spectators of the incident.

I have since been told by one who knew the Bishop well that this was characteristic of him, and that he, like the Rev. Dr Stuart, held the affectionate regard of the people of Dunedin for his thoughtfulness for others and host of kindly deeds.

A Sick Cow. During the comparatively short period the Rev. Father Aubrey had charge of the parish before the Very Rev. Dean Hyland's appointment, a humorous incident occurred at the Christmas time distribution of prizes to the school children, which took place in the evening. I was Mayor at the time, and had accepted an invitation to preside, and present the awards. Father Aubrey was addressing the gathering, which included a large number of the parents, when a door near him opened just sufficient for a head to pop in. It was the Priest's man of all works, who apparently was a lineal descendant of Charles Lever's "Handy Andy." His face indicated great anxiety, and he called out "Father, Father!" Father Aubrey, continuing his address, waved his hand to the man to be off. He was (not to be denied, however, and more urgently he repeated his cry of "Father, Father!" Father Aubrey stopped and asked, "What is the matter? You should not interrupt me. Be off." The man excitedly exclaimed, "Father, the cow's sick, the cow's sick!" "For goodness sake go away and get it some medicine," ordered Father Aubrey, and then turned to a smiling audience to continue his address.

A Marriage Interlude. I have one more incident in connexion with the church to relate which also had its humorous side, but certainly not to the individuals concerned. I had undertaken to photograph the Roman Catholic churches in North Canterbury for reproduction in the "Canterbury Times," a paper that ceased publication in the War time. I had planted my camera in front of the church and was about to take a snap, when I was pleased to see the carriage and pair of a Wedding party pull up at the gate, as this served to put life into the picture. The Wedding ceremony had been in progress for some time, and I was standing at the gate waiting to get an interesting picture, When the bridegroom came rushing from the church and down the path as hard as he could foot it. Naturally thinking that his nerve had given way, and that he had deserted the bride at the altar, I deemed it the duty of a J.P. to stop him and demand an explanation of his conduct. Guessing my intention, however, he cried out "Don't stop me. I have forgotten the ring." I got out of his way, and seizing a bicycle at the gate, he sped away to his house, some distance up High Street, and when he returned he was in an exhausted condition, and the best specimen of a man "bathed in perspiration" I think I have ever seen.

The ceremony had been resumed some time, but the incident had not closed. While I was still waiting, up rode a young man on a bicycle, and he too seemed to be exhausted, and almost as hot as the bridegroom. He asked in a breathless manner "Is there a wedding going on here." "Yes," I replied, "but it would have been over by this time if the bridegroom had not forgotten the ring." "Well, it's a pretty go," he said. "I'm the best man, but on my way from Christchurch I had a tyre puncture." "Don't worry," I said, "you will be in time to do your duty in escorting the bridesmaid from the church."

The Wesleyans in the Field. Although the Wesleyan Methodist cause had been established in North Canterbury in the early sixties a congregation was not formed in Rangiora until 1872, the field having been left to the United Free Methodists. The Wesleyans had places of Worship at Kaiapoi, Woodend (opened in 1864), Swannanoa, and Loburn. In the latter locality five staunch

Wesleyan families formed a congregation and erected a small church. One of these families came out with the first four ship pilgrims. Knowing that the pilgrims had to be vouched for as being strictly members of the Church of England before they were granted passages in the four ships, out of curiosity I asked the head of the family in question how he managed to get a clean bill of Episcopalianism. His reply, given with a laugh, was that the vicar of the parish was an easy-going old fellow with whom he was very friendly, and when he explained to him his desire to join the pilgrim band he readily supplied him with the necessary certificate.

I may mention that the pilgrim's wife, shortly after their arrival, started a Wesleyan Sunday School at St. Albans, whereupon the Anglican Church minister ordered her to close it, on the ground that the settlement was exclusively for the Church of England doctrine. The good lady refused to comply, and declared that if she was interfered with she would appeal to the Queen, to whose kingdom the colony belonged. This seemed to have settled the matter, for she heard nothing more about it.

The Wesleyan centres I have mentioned above formed the Kaiapoi Circuit under the ministry of the Rev. R. Bavin. In the year 1872 some dissension occurred in the Church of England between the incumbent and the choir which resulted in several people leaving the church. The opportunity to form a Wesleyan congregation in the township was taken advantage of, and a church was built on the Ashley Road near what is now the site of Horrell's Garage. In a very short time after the church was opened, however, the majority of the congregation returned to the Anglican fold, leaving it practically "high and dry." It was then decided to remove the building to Southbrook and add it to a small church already in existence there. In moving the building it got badly stuck in the Northbrook Creek, and a strenuous endower on the part of a large team of horses failed to extricate it. The contractors, Messrs Boyd and Keir, at last sent to Oxford for a team of bullocks, which when yoked up to its load, walked away with it in an unconcerned manner. It may be added that the old church is still doing duty at Southbrook as a Sunday school. The present church, Trinity Church by name, situated in King Street, was opened in November 1875 Bull being the first minister in charge, and enlarged in 1896 to provide increased seating accommodation when the union of the churches took place. Here the Methodist cause has flourished, fostered by many who have been connected by membership for a great number of years, one of the oldest adherents being Mr Samuel Ayers, who has at different times filled most of the important offices open to the laity. I may add that the congregation has a well advanced project to erect a new church.

A Unique Marriage. Not having been connected with the church, I cannot give any account of its inner history, but I can recall the fact that one of its ministers had an experience unique no doubt in the southern hemisphere, if not further afield, that of marrying a young couple who had already been married a week and didn't know it. The incident, improbable as it may seem, came about in this way: In the early days the office of Registrar of Births,

Deaths, and Marriages was not connected with the Post Office, but was relegated, usually, to a Justice of the Peace. At the time of which I write Mr A. H. Cunningham filled the office in Rangiora, and it was he who accomplished what might be thought to be the impossible by marrying the young couple in question without their being aware of the fact that they had been made husband and wife until a week afterwards. The young man had been told that when he went to the Registrar for the certificate authorising marriage he would have to take his intended bride and a friend with him. Very naturally Mr Cunningham concluded by the size of the party that marriage was intended, and acted accordingly. The certificate authorising the marriage had been duly prepared and the fee of £1/2/6 paid. Mr Cunningham then proceeded to join the couple in holy wedlock. "Have you the ring," he asked, and unfortunately for him the bridegroom had already purchased it, and had it in the corner of his vest pocket, otherwise the mistake over the ceremony would have been discovered. The ceremony then continued, and the vows of love and fidelity having been made, and the ring duly placed on the bride's finger, Mrs Cunningham was called in to act as the second witness. Mr Cunningham then made out the marriage lines, and handing the document to the young lady, addressed a little homily to both, with his congratulations. Then he rather surprised the bridegroom with a request for another £1/2/6. This he paid, but thought the preliminary expenses were rather high, seeing that the parson had yet to get his fee. The youthful pair and their friend were perplexed over their experience, but came to the conclusion that it was the lawful official preliminary to the grander event to take place the next week, and the young lady handed back the ring and with it the marriage certificate. The wedding day came, and there was a crowded church. Just before the bride entered at the door the minister asked the bridegroom if he had the Registrar's certificate. "Yes," he said, "I have a document which cost me £2/5/-." On producing it, the minister, taking in the situation at a glance, exclaimed: "Why, man alive, you have already been married by the Registrar." "Good heavens," said the astonished bridegroom, "have been married a week and didn't know it. There was consternation for a minute or two, but there was nothing for it but to carry on, and the happy couple were none the worse for being married twice in one week, although, of course, they were subjected to a good deal of chaffing.

#### Part XIV.

IN LOOKING backwards it occurs to me that my reminiscences, to be in proper order, should have commenced with some account of the experiences of the Rangiora pioneers from the time of their arrival at Lyttelton until they were settled in their new homes. I can, only refer to those of my own kindred. Mr Ivory never told me why he selected Rangiora for his home without first making a visit to the locality. The other members of the family, who arrived later by the ship "Glentanner," came to join him, there being plenty of work incidental to pioneering to be found—bush felling, sawing timber, splitting shingles, digging drains, and building houses being the chief employments. The first difficulty they met with was getting transport of their belongings from Lyttelton. Most of their heavy things were taken by small craft round from

port and up to Heathcote to Ferrymead, from whence it was transported northward, chiefly by bullock drays. The people themselves had to walk. This was their first real colonial experience, and it was not an enjoyable one. The Aquila Ivory and Doggett party consisted of five adults and about seven children, some of them very young. They also had a certain amount of impedimenta with them. Leaving Lyttelton in the early morning, they had a difficult climb up the muddy Bridle Path to the summit of the Port Hills, and for the first time looked down on the land of their future home. In the near distance they saw the few scattered houses forming the town of Christchurch. To the northward there was a vast and seemingly uninhabited plain, relieved here and there by dark patches of bush, and gleam of water in the rivers and swamps. Beyond all on the north and west were the ranges of blue mountains, snow capped on the higher peaks, and on the east were the sand dunes, with the white surf and glistening waves of the Pacific Ocean. It was a great contrast to the green hills and dales or the busy towns of the Homeland, to which they had been accustomed, and no doubt some of the party looked on the scene with sinking hearts.

A Strenuous Trek. However, they went forward, trudging through Christchurch, and on and on along the swampy track, running north, some of the younger children hwing to be carried. On reaching the Styx, they crossed on a bridge made of bundles of flax sticks, from which the stream took its name originally. Then came the ferry over the Waimakariri, and by nightfall the little party reached Kaiapoi, where they expected Mr William Ivory to meet them with a dray. He had been there, and waited until evening, but not getting any tidings of the party, he concluded they had not come beyond Christchurch, and he returned home. After a brief rest and some refreshment the pilgrims decided to go forward, and I want you to remember that the whole way they travelled over was but a rough dray track. At Woodend they found some good friends amongst those residing there, chiefly bushmen, and the children were supplied with milk. To reach Rangiora from Woodend they had to travel some distance towards Waikuku and then take the track along the Ashley bank to avoid the swampy ground to the southward, and eventually at 11 o'clock at night they arrived at Mr H. Vincent's house, which is still to be seen, the first house on the left-hand side of the Woodend Road from the East Belt, surrounded by trees. From thence they were guided to Mr Ivory's home, nearly another mile to travel, by Mr Harry Carter, who, by the way, afterwards married one of the party, Mrs A. Ivory's sister. The commotion caused by the arrival of the pilgrims in the dead of night, and everyone in bed, can better be imagined than described. Accommodation had to be found for them in the three small rooms of the lean-to dwelling, and food hastily got ready. Just imagine what the women and children had gone through in the tramp of thirty odd miles, and contrast their weary walk along the rough track to the swift travelling of motor-cars over the splendid roads we have today.

Other Pedestrian Feats. Landing in Lyttelton at the end of the same year my parents and two children, a boy and girl under 14 (my father hwing been twice married) did the same journey in the one day, and my mother lost her galoshes in the mud of the Bridle Path, although it was the height of summer. The

people seemed to think little of walking in those days. For instance, my mother took an afternoon walk to Springbank, seven miles distant; and, back more than once to call on Mrs Chapman, and there was only a dray track. On one occasion she took a short cut through a wilderness of flax, and fell into a spring-hole (Maori wells they called them) and would have been drowned had she not grasped a piece of flax and hung on until her cries brought a man to the rescue. I heard only a short time since of the wife of a settler at Swannanoa frequently walking into Kaiapoi to do shopping, carrying a child in her arms, and a load of butter on her head. People who had business to do in Christchurch simply walked there and back, having no other means of transit. I have been told that the Rangiora representative on the Provincial Council (Mr Crosbie Ward I believe), who was employed in the bush, used to knock off, work at noon and walk into Christchurch to attend an evening sitting of the Council, and walk back after the session closed. Again, Mr Wm. Bell and his son, Mr Jonathan Bell (father of Messrs C. W. and Cyril Bell), who played the 'cello and the violin respectively, and who belonged to an orchestra in Christchurch, used to walk in for practice, carrying their instruments, and return home in the same manner.

A Typical Pioneer. Amongst the early settlers in Rangiora there were some who were outstanding as pioneers, such as Messrs C. J. Leech, H. Blackett, W. E. Ivory, and Mr W. H. Percival. Mr Ivory being in the picture above, I will make reference to him first, and the others will follow.

Mr Ivory was born in Costessy, near Norwich, in the year 1823. After leaving school he served an apprenticeship of seven years in a large horticultural establishment in Norwich. Afterwards he became gardener at Tring Park, Herts, an estate that afterwards acquired fame as the residence of Lord Beaconsfield (Disraeli). Here Mr Ivory had of a series of hothouses that provided the mansion with grapes all the year round. Constant working under glass commenced to undermine his health, and this turned his attention to New Zealand, then becoming known as a land of promise. In the early part of 1853 Mr Ivory made up his mind to try his fortune in the new land, and his brother-in-law, Mr W. Stapleforth, decided to accompany him, with his wife and young child (Mr Ivory's family consisted of his wife and five children). Some time before they set sail Mr Stapleforth was at the Charing Cross railway station and noticed a brightly painted dray in a truck. A porter told him that a man named Bell was taking it to New Zealand, a place right down underneath them. Mr Stapleforth remarked that he was shortly leaving for the same place. The porter told him he was mad, New Zealand being full of cannibals who would kill and eat him. The little family party took passage in the ship *Cashmere*, which arrived at Lyttelton in October, 1855. Mr Stapleforth found employment on the wharf at Lyttelton, where he remained for a year, but Mr Ivory determined to go further afield. One of the initial difficulties of colonial life the family encountered was the transporting of their belongings over the Port Hills, and Mr Ivory's first swag consisted of a 70 lb. feather bed which he carried one morning before breakfast over the Bridge Path on his back to Ferrymead, where the Heathcote River was crossed. Let me say here that many people brought their feather beds from the Old

Country as being their most treasured possessions. In my time we had for a great many years the feather bell brought from Home, and Mr Ivory told me that the bed he carried over the hill was still in commission forty years afterwards.

On Their Selection. A visit to the Canterbury Land Association's office led to Mr Ivory's selection of Rangiora for the future home of the family. At that time the settlers in the district; could be counted on the fingers of the two hands. The place then can only be described as largely a waste of bush, swamp, niggerheads, flax, and tussock, without roads, and the contrast to the beauties of Tring Park was so great that any but a pioneer of stout heart and settled purpose would have fled the scene to the more congenial neighbourhood of embryo city of the plains. The Rangiora bush proper consisted of about 150 acres, principally very fine black and white pine and totara trees. The bush was the chief attraction to many of the first settlers, work being found in felling and pit sawing the trees. When Mr Ivory arrived a commencement had been made with the pit sawing in a small way, to supply the settlers with material for their homes, and he lost no time in securing sufficient timber to make a start with what he claimed to be the first working man's dwelling erected in Rangiora. No doubt he was right about this, as the other few houses, widely scattered, belonged to settlers possessing some means, who had followed professions in the Homeland that demanded little or no labour of the hands.

Over fifty-six years after the old home was erected I photographed it with the pioneer builder in front, still hale and hearty, although verging on the 90th year of age. Hanging on the wall was one of his blue jumpers, preserved as a relic of the "blue jumper days," and over the door the hammer he used in the building operations. Regarding "blue jumper days": Let me explain that the men in the pioneering almost without exception wore blue jumpers, and I recollect that the boys looked forward very keenly to the time when they would be old enough to wear the manly garment, and carry their fishing worms in the breast pocket. Mr Ivory's cottage in its simple lean-to style of architecture, much adopted in those days with the object of adding front rooms when means permitted, was a marked contrast to the more pretentious homes of the well-to-do settlers, as they had upper storeys with dormer windows in the old English style of architecture. The living room was in the centre with a wide fireplace for burning wood, and to give space for the camp oven, or as some called it, Dutch oven, so familiar and useful in the pioneer days. Who of the children of the early days have forgotten the camp oven, in which mother baked the homemade loaf of the finest-flavoured bread ever produced? It is a recollection of my boyhood days that Mr Thomas, a well-known Christchurch lawyer, had a meal at our home, and was so enamoured of the bread that he made my mother promise to bake him a loaf and send it to town, to give his family an idea of what real home-made bread was like.

A Human Touch. Among the incidents in the early experiences of the Ivory family was one hwing a human touch that kept it green in memory. When the house was finished Mr Ivory turned his attention to cultivating some of his

land, and sowing vegetable seeds he had brought from England. Amongst these seeds were some radishes, and when they were ready for the meal table it was made a holiday event. The whole family dressed themselves in their best clothes to do honour to the first fruits of the new land, and, as thus related by Mr Ivory, "after grace, which I said with a fervour I had not before, nor have I since equalled, my heart being so full of gratitude" to the Giver of all good, we sat on our 'Canterbury blocks' (blocks cut from trees in the bush) around our rough-made table, and enjoyed those few simple radishes as though they were a royal feast."

Earthquake and Wind. Soon after the home was occupied came the new and startling experience of a very severe earthquake, which so upset the nerves of the family that they abandoned the house for the night, and camped in the open, fearing that another shock would bring the structure about their ears. Shortly afterwards they had another alarming visitation in the form of -a north-west gale. Coming over the country then without a vestige of anything to break its force, between the bush at the rear of the house and the hills to the northward it blew so furiously that the family were held prisoners for nearly two days, being afraid that if they opened their door the wind would enter and lift off the roof. At the same time in a v-shaped hut nearby two young men recently arrived from England had camped. They too dared not open their door, facing the north, feeling certain that the structure would collapse and do them bodily harm if they did. They were quite without food or drink, and Mr Ivory, being aware of this, when the wind commenced to abate crawled on his hands and knees to the place and passed them in some food. So strong was the gale that it carried the heavy iron camp oven, kept outside when not in use, several chains away. What with the earthquake and wind, the settlers thought that although the Maoris in their pa not far distant were friendly, they had come to a land of peril. A Sorrowful Event Nevertheless the people held on with stout hearts and for many years occupied their little home with contentment. Their first great sorrowful blow came two years after their settlement, when the mother of the home passed away. I mentioned in my first article,[See Addendum] (giving a history of the cemeteries) that Mrs Ivory's death was the second in the history of the place, the first being that of her brother-in-law, Mr David Doggett, which occurred in the same year—1857—three months after he arrived. Their graves at the foot of a cabbage tree were the first two in the Anglican Church Cemetery.

The First Orchard and Nursery. The first work done by Mr Ivory outside his own domain was the planting of an orchard for Mr C. Torlesse, most of the trees coming from Australia. Mr Halfacre, Ivory Street, is now in possession of the orchard, and one of the plum trees and a pear tree planted by Mr Ivory are still flourishing, and bearing fruit year by year. It was not long before Mr Ivory had some of his land under cultivation, and had set about rearing fruit trees, for which he found a ready sale among the settlers, who were by this time arriving in fair number. His chief difficulty was to procure suitable seed to rear trees for budding and grafting. I remember the time when we had to swe for him all the apple pips and stones from the stone fruit—but by perseverance, and aided by the fertility of the virgin soil, he very soon laid the



foundation of a nursery that eventually proved one of the main industries of the place. Mr Ivory's trees became famous, and every year orders were filled in greater number for quantities to go to many distant parts of the colony.

**A Record Wheat Crop.** In bringing his land under cultivation, Mr Ivory about the year 1859 dug an acre with a spade, a great task, but there were no ploughs in the district, (and sowed it in. wheat, which in the rich soil produced a crop that returned the enormous yield of close upon 120 bushels of grain, thus establishing a record which it is safe to say has never since been equalled in Canterbury. The crop was threshed either with the flail or a horse power threshing mill imported by the Rev. W. Raven, and the grain sold at 7/6 per bushel was ground into flour at the Cam Flour Mills, established in 1858. Part of the flour was used by Mr Wm. Sansom, one of the first bakers in the place, and he used to declare that it produced some of the finest quality bread he ever turned out.

**A Long Debate.** In my sketch of the Little Bethel, I had much to say about Mr Ivory, but I omitted to mention how greatly he enjoyed a discussion or debate on religious subjects. I recollect an instance in proof of this, and also that, as in the case of his sermons, when he was engrossed with his subject, his mind had no place for time. We lived right opposite his place, and one morning when I left for my office at 8 o'clock he was on the road in earnest debate on some religious theme with Mr W. Rossiter, a builder of Ashley, who at the time was erecting Burton's Brewery and was on his way to the job when they met. On returning home just after 12 o'clock, they were still going strong. When summoned to his dinner Mr Ivory showed great reluctance to leave the field, and when the two parted they continued, what I judged to be an argument, by shouting to each other until out of hearing. **A Boy Nurse** Mr Ivory's eldest son John found employment of a somewhat unique nature for a boy. One of the settlers in the neighbourhood was Mr W. Reeves, afterwards better known as the Hon. W. Reeves, who after a brief stay joined Mr Crosbie Ward, another name connected with the early history of Rangiora, in the proprietorship of the "Lyttelton Times" newspaper. Mr Reeves's son William Pember was then an infant, and there being no nurse girl to be hired John was employed in that capacity and carried out his duties faithfully and well. In after years when the Hon. W. P. Reeves made a name for himself as a politician and journalist, John used to take some credit for his successful career by declaring that it was, a good deal due to the care he bestowed on William Pember's feeding bottle. (In conclusion, it may be stated that Mr Ivory passed away on April 25, 1911, at the ripe age of 93.)

**More About the Dray.** A day or two after their arrival in Lyttelton, Mr Ivory and Mr Stapleforth went for an exploring walk to Christchurch. At Heathcote they noticed a sod house, and a dray in the field. Mr Stapleforth said he believed it was the dray he saw at the Charing Cross Station. Being curious to know whether such was the case, he made inquiry at the house and found it was the dray all right. The Bell family, consisting of Messrs William and Jonathan Bell and their father with other members, arrived two months previously (August 16), and had settled temporarily at Heathcote and built

the house. Mr William Bell came to Canterbury some years before the first four ships arrived, and returned to England to procure some agricultural implements. The family also brought a sack of potatoes and planting the eyes of the tubers raised a prolific crop, the potatoes with the eyes removed being used for consumption. Two years or so later Mr Jonathan Bell and his father walked to Rangiora carrying a spade, with which they tested the depth of soil, and they made their selection on what is now the West Belt where the land is of the best in the neighbourhood of the Borough.

#### Part XV. A Notable Colonist.

MR GEORGE JOHN LEECH. The outstanding figure of the fifties in the Rangiora settlement was Mr George John Leech, who had just claim to rank amongst the notable colonists of Canterbury. Mr Leech came of a family that could trace its history back to the time of William the Conqueror. The name in the remote times was Leche, but eventually the spelling was altered to Leech. In the earlier years of last century a Leech was lord of a manor covering five parishes, and he owned two packs of hounds, had fifty hunters in his stables, and mounted fifteen grooms in livery. Mr Leech was a member of a younger son branch of the family, and was a native of Penrith, Cumberland. After finishing his education he entered commercial life, and prior to leaving for New Zealand occupied an important position with the Joint Stock Banking Company of Whitehaven, Cumberland. An ardent churchman, he was attracted by the possibilities of the Church of England settlement in New Zealand, and decided to try his fortune in the colony. He set sail on October 16, 1852, accompanied by his wife, brother, and some servants, in the *Tasmania*, the last of the Canterbury Association's ships, and arrived in Lyttelton on March 15, 1853. Mr Leech had kept a diary from the time he left and the day after arrival he made the laconic entry: "House hunting." Next day there is the note: "Took Mr Alport's cottage, 10/- per week," and he added to this some time later: "Left Friday 1st July." This conveys the fact that Mrs Leech remained in Lyttelton until a home was ready for her in Rangiora.

Mr Leech brought a quantity of goods with the family's personal effects, calculated to be saleable to his fellow settlers, and included there were 27 gallons of brandy which had cost him 17/- per gallon, and on which he paid duty at the rate of 6/- per gallon. Nine days after arrival Mr Leech noted in his diary: "Walked from Kaiapoi." How he went to Kaiapoi he does not say, but it is evident that he had been spying out the land. Next day was Good Friday, and on the Saturday he went to the Canterbury Association's office at Christchurch to select his section; which he then and there named Brooklands. A spell of bad weather occurred, and it was not until twelve days later that he set out, accompanied by his brother Charles and two other members of his household, to inspect his selection. By evening they had reached the Waimakariri at Kaiapoi, and were ferried over the river in a canoe by a Maori boy. That night they stayed with Mr W. P. Welch, whose house and that of Mr T. H. Harrison were the only habitations, besides a wattle and daub hut built by Mr A. Baxter, the first white settler in Kaiapoi.

First Selection Disappointing. Next day the little party made its way through swamp and flax to Rangiora. There Mr Leech met with a disappointment. By a note in his diary it would seem that he had chosen stony land, probably near the Ashley River, for as he put it: "Too much gravel bed." He decided to make a fresh choice, and after a look around he decided to settle on the Cam stream, his principal reason being that before he left the Homeland his father had advised him to be sure and have a stream of water running through the land he selected for his farm. The selection was almost entirely one of swamp, flax, niggerheads, and rushes. The change from a bank officer to that of a colonist, with scores of acres to win from a virgin state as that described, might well be an appalling one, but not so to Mr Leech. His diary records a story of patient and persevering toil, until he won from the waste a well drained and highly productive farm surrounding the beautiful old homestead of "Brooklands."

On the Selection. Mr Leech's first undertaking on his selection was the erection of a house. He had the frame work of the building constructed at Lyttelton at a cost of £20, and he also purchased the timber for the walls, etc., and shingles for the roof at a further cost of £57/1/-, the charge for the timber being 16/- per 100 ft., and the shingles 15/- per 100. The whole of this material was conveyed by a small craft to Heathcote, and thence to Rangiora by dray. Mr Leech's next important purchase was two draught horses, for which he paid a hundred guineas to a settler at Rhodes Bay. As recorded in his diary, there were four days' phenomenal rain at this time, the rain gauge at the Land Office registering a fall exceeding that of the whole of the previous twelve months. On the first of the wet days Mr Leech pitched his tent on the sodden ground, and on the following day the only entry in his diary runs: "wet day, miserable." On April 25, with the help of two men who came from England with him, he commenced the erection of his house. The house being finished, and a cottage built for one of his employees who came from Home with him and had a wife and young family, all his energy, with that of his brother, who had a partnership interest in the place for a short time, and his two men, was devoted to clearing and draining some of the land for cultivation. In the draining operations a considerable length of ditches had to be dug to run the water into the Cam stream. It may be here noted that the Cam at that time carried a greater volume of water than in later years. Its head was in the field on the left hand side of the road near the entrance to the Rangiora Recreation ground, and a considerable stream ran through what is now Mr Tutton's land where its dry bed is still seen. It was fed by numerous springs, caused by percolation from the Ashley River.

Birth of a Great Industry. But to continue: The industry of Mr Leech and fellow workers and success of their strenuous labour is evidenced by the terse entry in the diary, dated June 8, 1853: "Put the plough into Brooklands." This is one of the most interesting and important records in the diary. It probably marks the birth of the grain growing industry in North Canterbury, but certainly of the Rangiora district when I wrote "probably" in North Canterbury, I do so for the reason that the Rev. Wm. Raven, of Ravenswood, Waikuku, one of the pilgrim clergy, took a very keen interest in the fostering of agriculture,

and imported a quantity of farm machinery soon after his arrival. Amongst this machinery was a horse power threshing mill Which Was used in the hardest time of 1854. I think from this it must be inferred that Mr Raven had some of his land under grain crops at the same time as Mr Leech, if not the year before.

Sowing and Reaping. Mr Leech's diary shows that in the early part of September of the same year (1853) he sowed oats of the Egremont variety, also Early Emperor and Sabre peas and a variety of garden seeds. He also records that on January 26 of the following year he commenced his harvest, six and a half stooks, or seventy-nine sheaves of oats, being cut that afternoon. There is also proof that he grew wheat that season, for a June entry in the diary reads that he had been threshing wheat. Again an entry dated September 5, 1854, reads: "Began grinding our own wheat this morning. Had a cake to tea made of our own wheat grown at Brooklands."

A commencement of the reaping was made with reaping hooks, but this it was decided was too slow, and scythes were substituted. Mr Leech records that they had been very fortunate with the crops, they hwing been harvested without damage by Weather. Regarding the threshing and Mr Raven's mill, I have already referred to: Under date April 27, 1854, appears the following entry in the diary: "Captain Fuller passed with his threshing machine. Said that potatoes were selling at £68 per ton in Melbourne and £20 per ton in Nelson, Which brightens our agricultural prospects." Captain Francis Fuller was an English Army officer who came to the colony just after the first settlers, and spent five years in Canterbury. On his return to the Homeland he wrote an interesting and informative book on his experiences. He was a brother of Captain J. Fuller, father of Mr F. Fuller and Miss Fuller of Victoria Street. The Captain Fuller in question had land in the Woodend district, and had some business connexion With the Rev. W. Raven. This I believe explains why he was working the threshing mill which no doubt was the one Mr Raven imported. Mr Leech subsequently arranged With Captain Fuller to do the threshing. This occupied three days, 90 bushels being threshed on the first day, and the cost was £7, Wages at the time being from 6/- to 8/- a day. Mr Leech had his own wheat grinding mill, which was operated by hand and turned out the flour ready for use.

Interesting Family Event. But to turn back: Entries in the diary prove Mr Leech to have been a pedestrian of no mean stamina, for almost weekly he walked to and fro between Rangiora and Lyttelton to see his wife and do business in Port. On July 4 an interesting event took place. It is thus recorded in the diary: At half past 7 p.m., born W. H. Leech, son of G. J. and Ann Leech, at Mrs Turner's Bridle Cottage, Bridle Path, Lyttelton."

On August 26 Mrs Leech and her little son arrived at Brooklands, their future home, and the good lady commenced her pioneering life in earnest, adapting herself in the same undaunted spirit as that shown by her husband. I have before me the account for shipping the family belongings from Lyttelton to the Heathcote. Including boxes and furniture, there are ten articles enumerated,

and the measurement of each is given very precisely, the Whole charge for freight being £1/5/9. The account is: Dr to "Palinurus" (the name of the small vessel trading between the two ports), and at the top of the billhead is the motto "Freight is the mother of wages."

"An Arduous Time." Digging ditches to drain the swamp land was one of the main occupations for a long time. Then fencing had to be undertaken, and to this end Mr Leech purchased from Mr C. O. Torlesse for the sum of £25 the bush on an acre of land, all the trees and undergrowth to be removed within three years. Entries in the diary extending over many months show a record of incessant toil during which the falling of trees, splitting posts and rails, and cutting up firewood formed a large proportion of the work. Due credit is given to Mr Leech's two draught horses, Punch and Farmer, for the useful part they took in the general operations. Shoeing the horses necessitated a journey to Christchurch, there being no smithy nearer at the time.

Mr Leech purchased his first cow, named Peggy, at Lyttelton in October. She supplied the family's needs in her line for a considerable period, and at last came to her death by drowning in a spring hole known to this day as "Peggy's spring." In time Mr Leech built up a milking herd, and did a large business in butter, his chief customers being the men working in the bush. The fixed price of the commodity was 1/6 per lb. According to a note in the diary the price of bread in 1853 was from 10d to 1/- a 2 lb. loaf, flour being 48/- per 100 lbs., a fraction under £50 per ton. At the same time potatoes were £9 per ton. Trading Activities Before leaving the Old Country Mr Leech had the forethought to procure a stock of tools, hardware, and other goods he thought would be of use to himself and family, and also in demand by his fellow settlers. He had no difficulty in disposing of his surplus stock; and he made regular importations from home, eventually opening a store in Kaiapoi with a manager in charge. I noticed an entry of 138 gallons of gin amongst his imports, and his account books show that it met with a ready sale in two-gallon lots at 22/6 a gallon. In the early days gin of the Black Cat brand, and Hennessy's Three Star brandy were the more common spirits in favour for home consumption. Before the stores were established in Rangiora Mr Leech's trading facilities were a great boon to the settlers, and in his old account books are the names of many who as years went on became prominent in the community affairs of Kaiapoi, Rangiora, and the surrounding districts. Prices for the commodities stocked appear to have been reasonable, many of them not much in excess of those of the present day. The chief difference was in tools: For example, crosscut and pit saws were priced at 5/- per foot, hand saws 8/- and 9/- each, hatchets 4/-, tomahawks 7/6, American axes 12/- to 14/-, sheep shears 7/6, and scythes 6/6. There was a considerable demand for tinder boxes. These I presume were used in lieu of matches.

Time came when Mr Leech relinquished his business at Kaiapoi, and also ceased his home trading when stores were opened in Rangiora. Having abundance of flax on his land, and the Cam for water power, Mr Leech, about the year 1874, set up a flax mill which operated for many years. Under the

management of his son, Mr Charles Leech, it turned out some of the highest quality fibre ever exported to the Old Country.

Wild Ducks and Eels Galore. There is ample evidence in the diary that wild ducks were plentiful. Mr Leech and his brother when out shooting seldom returned without a good bag of ducks. On their first Christmas Day the family had a young duck pie and their first dish of green peas. On January 8 they had roast duck and their first new potatoes. The diary entry for January 17 reads: "Roast duck, quail, and new potatoes to dinner. Delicious. My boy sat on the floor with a bone in each hand." The Cam appears to have been teeming with eels. The diary records that on four successive days, in catches of from 10 to 15 a day, 45 were secured.

Death of the First Born. An entry in the diary for January 17, 1855, records a poignant sorrow that came to the father and mother. It reads thus: "It is my sad lot to relate the death of my dear child about 3 o'clock this morning; occasioned by suffocation." I have been credibly told that suffocation was caused by a hard pea it swallowed. The diary entry for the next day reads: "Another sad and sorrowful day, conveying the remains of our dear child to the grave made in the garden next our house, amidst the flowers his little hands delighted to play with." The Rev. W. Raven read the burial service. Five months later the blank in the home was filled in some measure by the birth of another boy.

Leech's Pippin. On the voyage from the Homeland the ship made a short stay at Madeira. Mrs Leech purchased some apples, and saving the pips, they were planted at Brooklands. One tree was the result, and this was named Leech's pippin. The tree is still flourishing and bearing fruit. Mr Ivory had grafts from the tree, and distributed from his nursery, it became well known among the varieties of the early days.

In the beginning of July, 1855, Mr H. E. Alport, a Christchurch auctioneer, held a sale on the corner where the Red Lion Hotel now stands. Amongst the things he had to dispose of were some apple trees brought down from Nelson. There were three varieties—Nonsuch, Nonpareil, and Ribstone Pippin. Mr Leech bought eight of each and planted one of the first orchards in the Rangiora district. Regarding the Sabre pea I mentioned in the earlier part of this article, Mr Charles Leech, who occupies the old home with his two sisters, told me a few days since the interesting fact that the same pea has been grown in the garden at Brooklands every year since 1853.

Auction Sales Anathema. Mr Leech had a strong antipathy to auction sales. In conversation with him one day he told me that he had attended only one auction sale, and on that occasion he was compelled to be present for legal reasons. He explained that if he wanted to purchase, say, a cow, he found out where one was for sale and if it suited him he bought it. He went on to say that if a man got into difficulties, through no fault of his, and was forced to sell his belongings by auction, did his neighbours come to the sale with the intention of helping him in his trouble? Certainly not. They were there to see

how many bargains they could get, and with every bargain they gave their neighbour a kick when he was down.

“Waikoruru.” It was not long after settling at Brooklands that Mr Leech established most friendly relations with the Maoris at Tuahiwi. His kindness to them won him very warm affection, and he became to them an advisory chief. He showed them how to cultivate their land and grow grain crops, also how to manage cattle for milking and traction purposes. For reason that his land was swampy and quaky under foot they gave him the figurative name “Waikoruru,” meaning “all of a shake.” Mrs Leech suffered a severe fright one day not long after she made her home at Brooklands. She was alone when a party of over 300 Maoris came over from Tuahiwi and stopped for a time near the house. They turned out to be perfectly friendly, however, and were on their Way to visit the West Coast. The native rats were numerous in the swamps in the early days and gave the settlers trouble by their depredations. Mr Leech noted in his diary that one night he had the tail of his undergarment eaten off and damaged in other parts by the rats.

Community Interests. Mr Leech took a keen interest in church affairs, being one of the founders of the Anglican Church at Rangiora, and for thirty-four years he served as a vestryman or churchwarden. He was also one of those who took a leading part in the establishment of the Rangiora High School, and served for several years on the Board of Governors, part of the time as chairman. He was one of the promoters of the Rangiora Investment and Building Society, which assisted many working men to acquire homes of their own. He took no leading part in politics, but was ever quietly interested in movements for the furtherance of the well-being of the community.

In Conclusion. The diary from which the subject matter of this short biographical sketch has been gleaned ended abruptly on 8th September, 1856. The record of the first three years of pioneering experience contained in three small books, together with some account books that have been preserved, is extremely valuable, no other first-hand information of the kind relating to North Canterbury being, as far as I know, extant. Much of what I have written deals with the first year's experiences, but what followed in the two succeeding years differs little except in some unimportant details. In March 1856 Mr Leech added 50 acres to his holding at a cost of £3 per acre, and clearing, draining, and fencing had to go on. More and more land was brought under cultivation, and the area under crop extended until quite a considerable harvest was collected, when Mr Leech was able to dispose of a good deal of surplus oats. In his first year of small things he sold 104 bushels at 8/- per bushel to settlers scattered widely from Rangiora.

Holidays were never thought of; in fact, Mr Leech was only once from his home on holiday during the 50 years of his life at Brooklands, and that was to pay a short visit to an old friend in the south. Entries in the diary show that during the three years, at short intervals, he walked to Lyttelton or Christchurch and back, and only once he notes that he was “used up and foot-sore.” To me, as one of those privileged to know him intimately in these later years of his life,

his friendship was a constant source of pleasure, and his memory has been an ever green one. The extreme sorrow of his life came to him on April 6, 1885, when death robbed him of his wife, who stood by him so loyally in all the difficulties he encountered in the pioneering days, and who shared with him the happiness and restfulness of the later years they had so well earned. Rich in long friendships and the esteem of the whole community, Mr Leech entered "the quiet heaven of us all" on January 16, 1902, at the age of 82.

#### Part XVI. An Outstanding Personality.

MR HENRY BLACKETT the public-spirited individuals in most communities there will be one, who by his ability, combined with enthusiasm and energy, stands out as a leader in civic affairs, Rangiora was fortunate in possessing one in Mr Henry Blackett, who has left behind him a great record of public service extending over nearly 40 years. Mr Blackett gave up business as a draper in Durham, his native town, for health reasons, and came to Canterbury in 1858. He saw in Rangiora, with its surroundings, the possibility of the development of a thriving township, and here he made his new home, entering into business as a general storekeeper and wine and spirit merchant. From the outset of his career he assumed a leading part in the affairs of the community, and when the settlement was young did much for its advancement. Amongst other matters that claimed his attention and active support was the formation of the Church of, England parish, and erection of the first church. Local Government Activities

In 1865 Mr Blackett was elected a member, and then chairman, of the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board, a body that had been in existence less than a year. In the local government of the district he quickly became an outstanding personality, and during the thirteen years he held the office of chairman of the Board much of the great progress made was due to his enterprise, energy, foresight and forceful character. More than any other man he strove for the progress of the district and the welfare of the settlers, and any scheme of work he proposed generally went through. The Road Board operations extended over an area almost as large again as the present County, but eventually the Eyre and Cust Road Districts, with separate were formed. The possibility of draining the great swamp that covered many hundreds of acres between Rangiora and Ohoka, and which extended in the direction of Fernside and Swannanoa, had been brought under the notice of the Provincial Council, and Mr E. Dobson in 1861 prepared a plan of a system of a main drain and seven smaller contributory drains. It was left to Mr Blackett to initiate a practical scheme for carrying out the system planned. He had to face strong opposition from some interested persons, even to the length of defending an action in the law courts, but with the help of a body of loyal supporters he had the satisfaction of carrying the scheme through, entailing as it did the enormous undertaking of digging out the miles of main and contributory drains. A drainage board was formed to see to the work being carried out, and to the maintenance of the drains, and Mr Blackett presided over it as chairman for several years. Eventually the Drainage Board Was abolished, the Road Board assuming its functions. It is not too much to say



that the collection of fertile farms that have superseded the swamp is a lasting memorial to the enterprise and energy of Mr Blackett.

In Road Board Days. For some years after Mr Blackett was at the head of the Road Board he had good scope for the display of his energy and resourcefulness. Most of its activities consisted of making drains, bridging the numerous creeks, forming and shingling roads, also forming footpaths in the township. In the middle sixties the main road that was in borough days to be named High Street, was roughly formed with a crown of heavy shingle; and the Drain Road, now Victoria Street, and the "Ashley Road were in the same condition, while several by-roads, most of them only half a chain wide, were almost impassable owing to flax and swampy patches, with here and there deep springholes rendering traffic at flight dangerous without a lantern. In addition to its ordinary activities the Road Board was called upon to see to the well-being of a large number of immigrants who were attracted to the colony by Sir Julius Vogel's immigration policy in the early seventies and Were drafted to Rangiora as a centre for employment purposes. Carrying out a resolution passed by the Provincial Council, several cottages were built in different parts of the Road Board's district for the accommodation of some of the families, and employment was found for others at the Oxford bush, and with farmers scattered over North Canterbury. Mr Blackett took a very active part in the settlement of the newcomers, and in giving them a start in their colonial life.

The Borough Established. The rapid growth of the township, and expansion of business enterprise—the chief factor of progress being the weekly market—led Mr Blackett and a few others who were taking a leading part in public affairs to decide that the time had arrived when the place was worthy of a more centralised form of government than that provided by the Road Board. There was strong opposition to the movement, but, as in other instances, Mr Blackett's generalship won the day, and on May 14, 1878, Rangiora was gazetted a borough.

By common consent Mr Blackett was elected first mayor of the Borough, and in that office and as a Councillor he served the burgesses for ten years, during which time he did a large share towards shaping the destiny of the municipality, and directing its progress along right lines.

Thunderstruck. I will never forget a knock-out surprise Mr Blackett received at a meeting of the Council when he was mayor for a second term in 1887. The town clerk (Mr M. Amy) reported that there were several ratepayers who had not paid their rates. Mr Blackett in a very emphatic way declared that they must be sued without respect to persons. This the Council agreed to, but Mr Blackett made another suggestion, that six should be proceeded against first as a warning to others, one to be selected from the A list, one from the B, and so on. This procedure also found favour, and the town clerk was asked for an A name as a start. He reported that all the A's had paid. "Now the B's," said the Mayor. "There's only one, Sir," said Mr Amy in a hesitating way. "Come, come," said the Mayor, "let us have the name." "Henry Blackett," was

the town clerk's response. Mr Blackett was thunderstruck, and his amazed face provoked peals of laughter from the Councillors. Suddenly he found his speech, and his son Andrew's ears must have burned while his father denounced him in no measured terms for his neglect in not paying the rates.

**A Man To Be Reckoned With.** To Mr A. H. Cunningham must be accorded credit for the establishment of the library, but Mr Blackett gave it his warm support, and Mrs Blackett worked enthusiastically for the bazaar held to raise funds for the erection of the Institute Hall with anterooms for the library. Some time after the hall was erected it was proposed to do something in connexion with it that did not meet with Mr Blackett's approval. The matter had to be decided by a meeting of the annual subscribers to the library, no other members being allowed to vote. Many regarded it as foregone conclusion that Mr Blackett's opposition would be futile. They, however, reckoned without Mr Blackett. The meeting was much larger than expected, and there appeared to be some new faces amongst the subscribers. When the crucial motion was put to the vote the result was a win for Mr Blackett and his supporters, much to the surprise and disgust of the other side. It was afterwards discovered that Mr Blackett had purchased 20 half-guinea annual tickets and distributed them to people pledged to vote for him.

**A Noteworthy Meeting.** This is another incident in Mr Blackett's career that demonstrated the determined way in which he prosecuted any scheme in which he was interested. When the Government projected the connexion of Oxford by rail with the main north line there arose rival factions in the district, one advocating a line from Rangiora, the other a line from Kaiapoi via West Eyreton. Mr Blackett led the Rangiora party, and when the controversy was at its height he heard that a meeting was to be held at West Eyreton to further the interests of the via Kaiapoi line. Thereupon he hired all coaches in the place, and with other vehicles loaded with townsmen set out to swamp the meeting. The West Eyreton folk, however, caught sight of, or had warning of the approaching cavalcade, and abandoning the meeting, locked up the schoolroom where it was to have been held, and took away the lamps. Nothing daunted, Mr Blackett's party gained entrance to the room, lit it up with tile candles out of their carriage lamps, and held a meeting. The speakers strongly advocated the Rangiora line, and the meeting carried a unanimous motion in its support. The reporters were then driven into Christchurch, and the next morning the newspapers published the astonishing news that West Eyreton had decided in favour of the Rangiora line. It is noteworthy that feeling was so strong for each line that the Government ultimately agreed to construct the two.

**Hard To Bear.** Mr Blackett was in his element when actively supporting the candidate of his choice in a Parliamentary Election. His sympathy was with the conservative side of politics, except on one notable occasion when he supported the Hon. E. Richardson, who was opposed by Mr R. Moore. Subsequently he gave whole-hearted support to Mr Moore, and it was when that gentleman was contesting the Kaiapoi seat in the Conservative interests against Mr W. Hoban, a Christchurch lawyer, who was put up by the Rangiora

and Kaiapoi branches of the Liberal Association, as a last recourse, when every effort to get a local candidate failed there occurred the following incident, amusing except to Mr Blackett. At the period of which I write there was no restriction whatever on canvassing; in fact, elections were carried out in a very much "go as you please" manner. The Road Board office was the polling booth, and the entrance was a few steps down a right-of-way, as old residents will remember. Came polling day, and Mr Blackett in his enthusiastic support of Mr Moore was out with his carriage and pair gathering in the electors of the right colour for his candidate. A party of electors was grouped at the booth entrance when up drove Mr Blackett with old Mr Pentecost as a passenger, brought from the extreme southwest corner of the borough. Both were deaf, and Mr Blackett, speaking in a loud voice, thus issued his instructions: "Now, Pentecost, mind you do as I tell you. Strike out the top name on the ballot paper." "All right," said Pentecost, "if you say so I'll do it" Mr Blackett finally admonished him: "Don't you make any mistake; cross out Hoban's name." Pentecost promised to obey, and made for the door. There he was stopped by Mr Tom White, a well known popular character of the time, who was in charge of the door in Mr Hobson's interests. Tom asked him who he was going to vote for. Pentecost replied that Mr Blackett had told him to strike out the top name. "Strike out the top name" said Tom with an air of astonishment, "why, lie has made a mistake. He is getting old, you know, and is liable to make mistakes. He should have told you to cross out the bottom name." "Oh," said Pentecost, "it's the bottom name I'm to cross out?" "Yes," replied Tom, "and mind you do it." Pentecost disappeared into the booth, and on coming out Tom asked him what he had done, and he replied: "Struck out the bottom name, of course." Then he made for his conveyance, and Mr Blackett, speaking loudly, said: "You struck out the top name as I told you to do?" "No," said Pentecost. "The man at the door told me you were getting old and had made a mistake. He said cross out the bottom name, and I did it." Then came a wrathful explosion from Mr Blackett, who denounced Pentecost's lack of sense, and shaking his Whip at White, threatened him With sundry pains and penalties not Written in the statute book. Then he brusquely ordered Pentecost to take his seat, and in high dudgeon drove him to his distant domicile.

A Singular Court Case. In the early times Justices of the Peace were called upon to do a good deal more Magistrate's Court work than is expected of them in the present day. Mr Blackett was for many years a Justice, and. did a large share of the Bench sittings, usually in company with Mr A. H. Cunningham. Let me tell of a unique and unforgettable case they figured in. Mr Cunningham was presiding and, sitting in the Magisterial chair, looked, with his flowing white beard, the very embodiment of justice. Mr Blackett also impressed one by his appearance as being competent to deal out justice with both hands. But like Naaman, the leper of ancient days, they had a blue-bottle fly in their ointment. They were both deaf.

The case in question was a fairly long one, in which counsel was engaged and several witnesses examined. The occupants of the Bench with solemn judicial mien appeared to be absorbing the evidence without missing a jot or tittle. At

the close Mr Cunningham leaned towards his companion and said "What do you think of it, Mr Blackett?"

"Think of it," replied Mr Blackett somewhat testily. "I can't think anything of it, for I have not heard a quarter of the evidence." "Neither have I," admitted Mr Cunningham, and both of the Justices looked about as helpless to deal with the situation as no doubt they felt. The lawyers smiled, the reporters smiled, in fact there was a unanimous smile, with two exceptions. They, were in too much of a quandary to see humour in the situation. After a brief silence one of the counsel ventured to suggest that under the circumstances it would be necessary to go through the case again. This course was followed, and by the aid of an addendum to the oath admonishing the witnesses to speak up, the deaf were made to hear, and they delivered judgment after due deliberation in the back room.

Serenading the Newly Wed. Mr Blackett believed in maintaining old customs, as the following will show the rough band, or tin-kettlers as they were generally called, was an important Wedding institution. It was not a period where the honeymoon was as common as in present times. The newlywed, in most cases, settled down in their homes straight away after the Wedding festivities at the parents' homes ended. The serenading by the tin-kettlers was usually performed outside the parents' place, while the festivities were in progress, the conditions promising a liberal supply of refreshments.

Mr Blackett's eldest son, Andrew, took unto himself a wife, and the wedding was celebrated with all the eclat befitting the social position of the family. The only item in the evening's programme that did not eventuate was the tin-kettlers' serenade. Next morning those who came in contact with Mr Blackett found him to be in anything but an amiable frame of mind. Congratulations on his son's wedding were like throwing petrol on a smouldering fire. He had a grievance, and he voiced it in no uncertain manner. He had been shamefully slighted. He had provided a keg of beer, and a special cake for the tin-kettlers, and they had neglected to turn up. He regarded it as little short of an insult. The rough band, however, regarded it as a calamity when they heard of what they had missed. The explanation of their failure to put in an appearance was that Mr Blackett being a J.P. and therefore responsible for the maintenance of peace and harmony, they were afraid that their musical efforts would be productive of neither of the attributes of his office, and further that it was certainly not of the charming nature calculated to "soothe the swage breast," so they reluctantly decided to "hang their harps on the willow tree," as it were, like the captive Jews in Babylon. The weeping, metaphorically speaking, came later when they learnt how they had missed the cake and beer.

Unappreciated Music. Not a great while after the foregoing episode Mr Blackett had reason to modify his interest in retaining the old wedding custom. Mr John Anderson who I have referred to in a previous sketch, went the length of launching himself on the ocean of married life, but not before being well advanced in years of discretion. On the evening he brought his bride home he found, when he started to prepare a cup of tea for the missis

that the chimney wouldn't draw. Investigation disclosed the fact of a sack being over the top of the smoke flue, and by the time he had climbed up to remove it he was in anything but a sweet honeymoon humour. It would seem that even the soothing effects of a cup of tea, with the charming presence of his spouse at the first connubial meal in their home, did not altogether allay the feeling of ire against the larrikins who had interfered with his chimney. This was unfortunate for the tin-kettlers. When they arrived and commenced to tune up their tin cans, cow bells, tin whistles and other nondescript instruments, John at once connected them with his chimney crowning and made ready to give them a warm reception. No sooner did the band settle down to discourse its music fortissimo than John issued forth, not with a bottle of wine in one hand and a plate of cake in the other, as was the correct custom. Oh dear no. From the sequel to the band's programme, I think he was likely to have been armed with a note-book and pencil to record the names of those who dared to disturb the quietness of his back yard, and acutely distress the musical ear of his wife and self. The music ceased abruptly in expectation of receiving the thanks of the bride and bridegroom for their serenade, followed by the customary material reward. Instead, after John had given them a look over for identification purposes, he peremptorily ordered them to clear out, with a threat of legal proceedings. In this John was as good as his word, and those he conceived to be the chief executive officers of the band had to appear before the Magistrate, who for some reason took a serious view of the case and inflicted a fine of £5 each with costs, the alternative being seven days in Lyttelton gaol. Here is the most interesting point of the story: Alas, Mr Blackett's second son was amongst the unfortunates, and he elected to go "over the hill." But his father decided otherwise, and rescued him from the police at the Railway Station, when en route for Lyttelton, by paying the fine. Only one of the party went to gaol, and he told me afterwards that it would be never again. He would willingly pay £5 rather than have another such experience.

Other Public Services. It would occupy too much space to tell of Mr Blackett's other numerous public activities in detail. He took a leading part in forming the Volunteer Fire Brigade on March 16, 1874; he was chairman of the first District School Committee elected on July 31, 1873, and was also one of the promoters of the Rangiora High School in 1883, and served for a considerable period on the Board of Governors. He assisted in the formation of the Rangiora Brass Band in January 1879, being chairman and treasurer of the committee. He was the first chairman of the Rangiora Domain Board, a position he filled for some years; he took a leading part in the establishing of the Rangiora Library, the inauguration of which took place on July 6, 1871, with a public gathering. He also helped to obtain the funds for the erection of the Institute Hall, and presided at the opening gathering on New Year's Day, 1872. Mr Blackett was also one of the promoters of the Rangiora Investment and Building Society, established in 1881, and of the New Year's Day sports in the early 'eighties.

During his years of public service Mr Blackett had many colleagues who worked heartily with him in furthering the interests of the town, and of the

general welfare of the community. I hope to have something to say about these later. The hospitality of Mr and Mrs Blackett was proverbial. If ally distinguished persons visited the town it was a foregone conclusion that they would be entertained at Mr Blackett's and there spend a pleasant time. However, it was not only distinguished visitors who participated in their kindness, Mr Blackett being too cosmopolitan for that to be the case. Mrs Blackett passed away on August 19, 1906, and Mr Blackett eleven months later, his death occurring on July 11, 1907, at the age of 87. They had a family of five sons and five daughters, but of the ten only three daughters are surviving.

## Part XII. Pastoral and Agricultural History

THOSE who penetrated to the heart .of the north after the arrival of the Canterbury Pilgrims were strongly impressed with its great possibilities for agricultural and pastoral pursuits, and so excellent were the preparations made by the Canterbury Association Survey Department, and the work of the surveyors, Messrs C. O. Torlesse and J. C. Boys, that within a short time almost the whole of North Canterbury was taken up for settlement. Within five years of the arrival of the first settlers thirty-three freeholds had been acquired in and around Kaiapoi, seventeen in the Rangiora district, and six at Woodend, the areas ranging from 50 to 200 acres. The great bulk of the country was, however, divided into pastoral runs, let by the Association on a seven years' tenure. As early as 1852 four or five hundred thousand acres had been taken up in this way. Amongst the early run-holders were Clifford and Weld, who held 59,000 acres; F. Waitt, 30,000; C. Sidey, 34,500; J. Hodgkinson, 29,000; Greenwood (Teviotdale), 60,000; Malloek, 17,000; Pawsey, 3,000; E. Mason, 30,000; and Moore and Kermode (Glenmark), 70,000. All the above land was north of the Waipara. Between that river and the Ashley, twelve settlers located themselves on holdings of from 5,000 to 20,000 acres, and between the Ashley and the Waimakariri (or the Courtenay as it was then called), there were seventeen with holdings of from 5,000 to 10,000 acres. Many of the run holders acquired the freeholds of their runs when they were opened for purchase, but very few now remain in the possession of the families of the pioneers.

The stocking of the runs was a question of time —great numbers of sheep, cattle, and horses were brought over from Australia in the first year of the settlement, and although the prices of stock and freight increased greatly during the next year owing to the gold fever in Australia, moderate shipments continued to arrive. A considerable portion of the stock was taken to the northern stations, and sheep also came in overland from the Wairau district, where the pastoral industry had been already well established for eight or ten years past. The first lot of sheep, numbering 3,300 was brought in by two parties in 1852, and others followed, with both sheep and cattle, during the next year. Very few of the early colonists had any knowledge of the management of sheep and cattle on the wild native pasturage, and had much to learn as to the breeds most profitable for their holdings. They had the experience of their Australian neighbours to guide them, however, land it was

not long before the wool industry began to assume importance. A considerable amount of trade was done with the station owners by the business people of Rangiora and Kaiapoi, and also big firms at Leithfield and Saltwater Creek. Both, the latter places were flourishing centres in the 'sixties. Saltwater Creek was a regular trading port for small craft, and large quantities of station requisites were landed there, to be carried to their destination by waggons and drays from the stations. In the trades directory for 1872 there were four wheelwright firms at the Creek, which gives some indication of the dray traffic. Like Leithfield, Saltwater Creek slumped when the railway missed it, but unlike the deserted mining towns in the western states of America, where, the buildings were left standing, the inhabitants took their homes with them when they moved to Sefton and Amberley.

**An All Night Sitting.** The nearest station to Rangiora was Fernside, owned by Messrs T. S. Mannering and A. H. Cunningham, and afterwards subdivided into a number of farms. It was on this station that Mr John O'Halloran, of Glentui, so widely known as a public man, first obtained his experience in the pastoral industry. He told me the story of- his engagement, and it is worth repeating. Mr O'Halloran had just landed and was in Christchurch on the look-out for employment. He heard that a Mr Cunningham was in town seeking the services of a man, and he got in touch with him. This was ill the afternoon, and Mr Cunningham arranged to see him at 10 o'clock the next morning to ascertain what he knew about sheep, as he was after an experienced man. Mr O'Halloran said he felt considerably nonplussed when he heard this, as he knew nothing whatever about sheep. Nothing daunted, however, he looked up a book shop, where he was fortunate to find a book on sheep and their management. This he studied the whole night through, and at 10 o'clock the next morning was well primed to fire off his knowledge of the different breeds of the woollies, their characteristics and upbringing. He met Mr Cunningham as arranged, and that gentleman had not advanced very far with his oral examination when he exclaimed: "Why, you know far more about sheep than I do. I can see you are something of an expert. You are just the man I want. I'll engage you." Thus did Mr O'Halloran commence his successful career as a sheepman.

**A Sheep Tragedy.** It was from the Fernside station that the first mob of sheep was driven to the West Coast. When the gold rush set in to the Coast it was not long before there, was an acute shortage of meat, and Messrs Mannering and Cunningham decided to make an attempt to get a mob of sheep over the hills to the goldfields. They drafted out 500 strong fat wethers, and with Mr Cunningham and his son Charles, John O'Halloran and Harry Jennings (my half-brother) in charge, a start was made on the adventurous journey. The route taken was over some pass west of what is now Hawarden—I don't know exactly where). The travelling was a rough and trying experience, but they got through safely until their destination was in sight. Nearing the end of their journey they came to a high cliff down which the miners, having word of the approach of the meat they were hungering for, had cut a narrow track. To negotiate the difficult path the flock was divided into two mobs, and Mr Cunningham and O'Halloran were in charge of the front one. They made the

mistake of pressing the sheep too hard at the entrance to the track, and suddenly one broke away and jumped over the cliff, and before anything could be done the whole mob of about 250 followed. Most of the first that fell were killed outright, many others had legs or backs broken, and not a large proportion escaped without injury. The other mob was got down safely, and the whole, were sold at £4 each, a fabulous price at the time, the killed and injured realising as much as the sheep of the second mob.

Another Grain Growing Venture. In previous sketches I have given the experiences of Mr Leech and Mr Ivory in grain growing. The year previous to Mr Ivory's experiment Mr Hamilton Ward made a venture of the same kind, the story of which, although previously published some years ago, will bear repetition for historical purposes, and for the benefit of those unacquainted with it. Mr Hamilton Ward owned the land to the southward of what is now the Borough School ground, in fact I am not sure but that the school ground site was included in his holding, and through which King Street now runs. No doubt Mr Ward was aware of the results of Mr Leech's experiments in grain growing, and this led him to carry out a trial on his own land. A single-furrow plough of an old English pattern, made as much of wood as of iron, was borrowed from McConnell's Mount Grey station, and two men undertook the job of ploughing the land, a five-acre field, in its rough virgin state a task of no mean kind. One held the plough handles, being the expert and the one on whom the strenuous part of the work fell, he received a wage of £1 per day; the other guided the horse, for which he was paid 15/- per day. The working hours were from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with an hour for dinner, a condition of labour and a wage that would greatly please farm hands if it existed today. When the land was ready for the seed the only man known to be an experienced hand-sower could not be found. Mr Ward in his dilemma asked Mr W. Stapleforth whether he could manage the job. Mr Stapleforth replied that he had seen sowing being done in Yorkshire when he was a boy, and although quite inexperienced in the work he would do his best. The first thing was to get a suitable receptacle for the seed wheat, and eventually Mrs Stapleforth overcame the difficulty by tying her baby's basket in front of him, and this served very nicely. Mr Stapleforth got on very well with his job, and while he was at work a passerby stood for a few minutes watching him, and then put the question: "What do you think you are doing?" "Sowing wheat," was the reply. "Well, you must be a fool," said the man, "to think that wheat will grow in this country." However, the wheat, which was Essex white variety, did grow; and yielded over 65 bushels to the acre. When the wheat was in stack the native rats came out of the near-by swamp in large numbers and attacked grain, until it was found necessary to stand guard over the stack every night until the wheat was threshed.

Traction Problem Solved. One great difficulty in the pioneering days was to get horses to use on the farm. They were scarce and high in price, a good draught animal being worth anything from £50 to £100. Mr W. Crysell, one of the early settlers in the Cust district, told me that he gave £100 each for two draughts. Ploughing with bullocks or a horse and a bullock was common. It is related that a farmer named Watts who lived on the Fernside plains rode



into Rangiora one day mounted on an upstanding donkey. His mission, the purchase of a plough from Mr Blackett, having been completed, he obtained three yards of rope and secured the implement to the Jackass's tail, well clear of its heels, and so towed to his home, three miles distant. On his farm there were only two animals, the said donkey and a cow, and with these he did his ploughing, a child guiding each. After breaking up the land with this plough Watt raised a record crop of potatoes, having obtained most of his seed by cutting the eyes out of each tuber peeled for cooking, and setting them in little boxes of loam to keep them alive until planting-out time came.

Progress of Agricultural Operations. In dealing with the agricultural operations of the early days, the evolution of the plough must not be overlooked. The first ploughs used were of the old English swing type without wheels, and constructed of both wood and iron. Then came the all iron and steel implement with one wheel working under the beam. The late Mr James Ashworth, of Leithfield, told me that the first iron plough brought to Canterbury was used on Mr Rhodes's estate on the Peninsula, where he was employed when a youth. He said further that when a number of these improved implements were brought into the country he saw as many as twenty of the old ploughs for sale in an auction yard on the triangle in Christchurch. There followed the two-wheel plough, something after the Scotch pattern, and many of these were made by Mr J. Keetley at his Kaiapoi implement works in the early sixties — both single and double-furrow. Finally a three-furrow plough was introduced, but of a different pattern to that of the present day. A photograph of a trial of one of these held some time in the early seventies on Mr C. Merton's farm at Melford, near Rangiora, shows that it had side wheels nearly 3ft. in diameter. As far as I am aware, the plough of that design never came into general use.

Reaping the Crops. The reaping in the infancy of the grain growing industry was first done with the reaping hook and scythe, but it was not long before a reaping machine was introduced, in working which the grain was raked off the platform by hand. This was followed by a self-raking machine, and in the harvest of 1875 or 1876 there was a red-letter event in the history of agriculture in Canterbury—the advent of the reaper and self-binder. The Wood wire binder was the first in the field, and the trials of the machine held in various parts of North Canterbury caused a mild sensation. The wire binder was not altogether a success, owing to the wire getting into the chaff and endangering the stock. However, the wire was soon superseded by string, and other improvements made in the binder produced the highly efficient machine of the present day. Before the days of the self binder, sheaf tying by hand gave employment to a large number of men in harvest time, but after the Scotch thistle nuisance became acute the job was anything but a pleasant one, and the Scotsman who in his sentimental but very foolish loyalty introduced the national emblem of his country to the colony was the cause of a good deal of lurid language being used. He was several degrees more misguided even than Archdeacon Dudley, who obtained, from the Old Country the seed of the wild white daisy and sowed it in his paddock with the object of obtaining white flowers to decorate the church at Christmas time.

Threshing in. Pioneer Days. Now for something about the grain threshing operations of the early days. Although, as related in the biographical sketch of Mr G. J. Leech, the Rev. J. Raven imported a horse power threshing mill about the year 1853, the primitive flail was pretty generally used for many years to thresh out small quantities of both wheat and oats. Although Mr Leech used Mr Raven's mill for threshing out the hulk of his first crops of grain, there are several subsequent entries in his diary such as "threshed wheat today to grind," which proves that he used the flail. In my childhood days I often saw the flail being used. It certainly gave the operator some good, healthy exercise, as did the winnowing machine through which the threshed grain was put to clean it from the chaff. When a machine of the kind was not available, the chaff was removed by tossing the grain in the air when a suitable breeze was blowing.

A Bolt With the Horse Gear. When Mr Raven's machine arrived he was faced with the difficulty of getting suitable horses to work it. Draught horses were priced at any figure between £50 and £100 each. At last he picked up four semi-thorough-bred animals more adapted to the racecourse than for working the thresher. After a good deal of trouble with the frisky quartette they were strongly hitched to the poles of the motive gear and induced to start. The clatter of the gear-wheels, and the noise of the threshing-mill, frightened them so much that they bolted. Efforts to stop them were futile—in fact only added to their alarm, which also increased as their frantic efforts to get away increased the noise of the machinery. At last, after their circus performance had thoroughly exhausted them, they came to a standstill of their own accord with sweat streaming off them. However, the outcome of this escapade was that they were completely broken in to the work expected of them, and gave no further trouble. Mr Leech in time imported one of the horse gear threshing mills, and there were probably one or two more in the district between Rangiora and Christchurch.

First Steam Threshing Plant. To Mr Joseph Stanton, of Kaiapoi, must be given the credit of importing the first steam threshing plant in North Canterbury, and it is also claimed to be the first in the Province. It arrived from the Homeland in 1862 by the ship Zealandia. The plant consisted of a portable Britling engine, and a Clayton and Shuttleworth's combine. The maker of the engine wrote informing Mr Stanton that he had built it specially strong for colonial work, having put in three bolts where two were considered sufficient for an engine used, in England. In proof of the good work put into the engine, I am informed that it is still doing service in a woodware factory in the North Island. The plant was brought round from Lyttelton in one of the small craft plying to the Heathcote, and was hauled from the Ferrymead steam wharf to Kaiapoi by a bullock team. Mr Felton had grave doubts as to whether his ferry was capable of bearing the heavy loads across the Waimakariri. The combine was carried first and was landed in safety. Then the engine was put aboard and Mr Fulton being convinced that it would pass over all right, rode with it to be able to say that he had crossed the river with the first threshing engine to be brought into North Canterbury. The threshing difficulties hitherto had deterred farmers from growing as much grain as they wished, but when it was

known that Mr Stanton's plant would be available for the 1862 threshing season it gave the wheat growing a fillip, and a largely increased area was sown in the neighbourhood of Kaiapoi. The machine started operations on Easter Monday and it was another red letter day event. Among those attracted to the spot was a party of at least 150 Maoris who came down from Tuahiwi in canoes on the Cam River, or by other means. This was the first time the natives had seen a steam engine and as can be imagined it was a source of wonder to them. They were amazed at seeing wheels turning without apparent cause except the fire, and when the engine driver opened a cock and let off a jet of steam there was great consternation, the natives evidently believing that a taipo (devil) of a new and malignant character was about to issue from the bowels of the engine.

Amazing Yields of Wheat. The results of the threshing with the plant that season were some amazing yields from the virgin soil, averages from 90 to 100 bushels of wheat per acre being common. Mr Stanton harvested a crop of Wheat of the white chaff red variety from 20 acres, and the threshing of this, commenced on the Easter Monday, gave a return of 2,000 bushels, or 100 bushels to the acre. Captain Francis Fuller, Whom I referred to in the biographical sketch of Mr Leech, who had experience of threshing, states in his book on five years in New Zealand, from 1853 to 1858, that at that early stage of agriculture in the colony, yields of wheat had been secured in North Canterbury averaging 100 bushels to the acre. Within the next four or five years there were at least five more steam threshing plants brought into North Canterbury—Messrs Robinson Ben, and Bell and Mounsey in the Rangiora district, and Messrs Wilson and Baker, Edwards and Pashby, at Kaiapoi. A difficulty that had to be contended with was the providing of horses to haul the heavy threshing plants from one farm to another, and over the soft stubble fields. The farmer who required the services of the machine usually had to provide means of transport, and it was a great relief to all when the traction engine superseded the old portables.

Boiled Rats on the Menu. A good many Maoris found employment with the threshing mills in the early days, and as a rule they gave satisfaction with their work. In mentioning the Maori machine hands I am reminded of an amusing incident an old settler named Charlie Watson, who lived at the five cross-roads towards Woodend used to relate. He was working on Robinson Benn's threshing machine with some Maoris, who gave him an invitation to have dinner with them and their wahines, who were preparing the meal. Knowing that the women had caught some fine eels in a near-by creek, and that they could cook them to perfection, he readily accepted the invitation. Let me mention here that the Maoris were adepts at catching eels with their hands. They were a very hardy race, the women often being seen by the early settlers in bitter south-west weather immersed to their waists in the creeks, feeling under the banks for eels. But to continue the story. A portion of the appetising dish was served out to Charlie, and he was thoroughly enjoying it when he caught sight of one of the wahines lifting the bodies of two large rats by their tails out of the same pot in which the eels had been cooked. "My word," said Charlie, "the piece of fish I had in my mouth at the time went

round my tongue a good many times before T could force it down my throat, and what I had already swallowed seemed terribly anxious to come up again." Charlie's sudden loss of appetite, and abrupt ending to his meal, greatly concerned the Maoris, and with their accustomed hospitality they urged him to have a portion of one of the rats, which seemed to be regarded as a special delicacy. This was too much for Charlie, Who fearing eventualities that were threatening, quickly made tracks, much to the astonishment of the natives.

The Flour-milling Industry. The flour mills too played their part, and a most important one, in the development of the agricultural industry. In the school geography of New Zealand in use in my school days reference to Rangiora was briefly: "Rangiora, a township situated on the south bank of the river Ashley, noted for its flour mills." I stated in a previous article that the Cam flourmill, the first in the district, was operating in 1858. This I have since found to be an error. The mill was erected in 1862 by Mr E. Steggal, but it did very little work for two years, owing to the small rainfall resulting in the mill stream, fed by an undercurrent from the Ashley River, running dry. About the year 1864 two mills were erected on the Southbrook stream, one, known as the Rangiora mill, by Mr R. Grimwood, and the other, the Southbrook, by Mr A. Cole. Mr Steggal disposed of the Cam mill to a man named Marshall, and acquired the Southbrook mill. In 1865 he added an oatmeal manufacturing plant, an enterprise much appreciated by the Canterbury settlers, the imported meal being of indifferent quality. There were also mills established in the middle sixties at Woodend, Ohoka, and Kaiapoi, and all were kept busy supplying the local demand for flour, and also that from the North Island and West Coast. It can be realised that with all these mills operating the grain growing industry had a very firm hold on North Canterbury as early as in the 'sixties.

## Part XVIII.

### Volunteering in the Early Days.

The military spirit was much in evidence in the middle sixties. The Volunteer movement received an extraordinary impetus in the year 1865. This was due partly to the Maori War in the North Island but more especially by a declaration of the General Government of its intention of calling out the Militia. Many settlers who had insuperable objections to being forced into service, therefore preferred the alternative and became enthusiastic volunteers. Some people were under the impression that the Maori War would assume a magnitude that would demand military assistance from the South Island, and there was also a dread, mostly amongst people living in the vicinity of pas in the South Island, that the natives might become excited over the hostilities in the North, and endeavour to emulate Te Kooti and his Hau Hau warriors. However, although the Maoris at Tuahiwi and other pas occasionally indulged in a war dance, it had no hostile meaning, and they continued to be on the most peaceful terms with their pakeha neighbours.

New Volunteer Companies Formed. The enthusiasm over the volunteer movement quickly extended throughout the Province, and was judiciously

fostered by the Provincial Council. Several new Rifle Companies came into existence. In North Canterbury Kaiapoi had possessed a company, known as No. 5, since about 1862, under command of Captain John Fuller, who had been an officer in the British Army. The other companies formed in North Canterbury were; Rangiora, No. 4, Captain John Brandon (a retired British Army officer), in August, 1866; Kowai, No. 3, Captain William M. Masked, June, 1866 (with Leithfield as headquarters); Woodend, No. 9, Captain Henry Hinge, 1867; and Oxford, No. 10, Captain Charles Sale, 1867. At Rangiora the Company had a roll call of almost a hundred, most of the able-bodied men of the settlement and neighbourhood having joined the ranks. The uniform was of dark blue cloth, and consisted of a tunic with red facings, and trousers with broad red side stripes, and a peaked cap with the company number in front. With the usual leather accoutrements, the Company, on parade, armed with rifles of the long Enfield pattern, had a smart and serviceable appearance. Due to the musical activities of Mr Charles Merton, the Company was fortunate to possess both a Brass Band and Drum and Fife Band, and if one was not on parade the other would be. Frequent evening marches through the township with an unlimited supply of music—amongst the tunes I recall being “The British Grenadier” and “The Girl I Left Behind Me”—served to keep the martial spirit from waning, and the place lively. Volunteer encampments which the company attended were held annually, Hillsborough, and in the sandhills south of the Waimakariri, being favourite camping grounds. The programme for the week under canvas included a sham fight, carried out with much sound and fury, and with many casualties in the way of dirty hands and faces from the use of the black powder and muzzle-loading rifles of the day.

Farmers Under Fire. Target practice in the Ashley riverbed was an important feature of the training of the Rangiora men. The target was of calico stretched on an iron frame, and there was indecision in marking sometimes when a bullet happened to pass through a hole already made. I recollect, as a small boy onlooker on one occasion when the firing was in progress, a man arriving on horseback at a breakneck speed, to report that the bullets were buzzing about the countryside on the north bank of the Ashley towards Loburn, to the danger of people working in the fields. This necessitated a hurried change of venue—with targets at a different angle. Captain Fuller of the Kaiapoi Rifles died suddenly at Woodend on May 25, 1867, and the military turnout at his funeral gave a good indication of the strength of the volunteers in North Canterbury. A holiday in those times made little or no disturbance to the routine of labour, consequently the Volunteer companies were represented almost to a man. Christchurch companies were also represented to some extent, and with two bands the cortege reached from the Captain’s residence in the Drain Road still occupied by Miss Fuller, almost to what is now High Street. It was by far the largest military turn-out ever seen in Rangiora.

Drill in the Open. The assembly place of the Rangiora Company was at first the old Masonic Hall in what is now King Street, and afterwards at Baugh’s assembly room, opposite the Plough Inn, made reference to in a former article. With the Maori War in view much of the open air drill consisted of field

skirmishing manoeuvres in the Rev. B. W. Dudley's field opposite the Church of England, in the course of which hundreds of blank cartridges were popped off in an evening, much to the excitement of the boys, including yours truly, who closely followed the riflemen. The loading of the rifle was quite a performance. First the cartridge had to be extracted from the catouch box on the uniform belt, then the top finished off with a twist of waterproof paper, had to be opened, usually with the teeth. The powder having been poured down the barrel, the ramrod was brought into play, and with it a wad from the cartridge case was rammed home and the rod returned to its place. Next a percussion cap, abstracted from a small pouch on the belt, was placed on the nipple, the hammer was then raised to full cock, and the weapon was ready for use. Of course the men got skilful in going through all the actions described, but compare it with the present day manipulation of the rifle. The bullet used in the old muzzle loaders was much heavier than that of the present day. It had a blunt conical top, and in the bottom end there was a small plug of hard Wood, the object of this being to expand the bullet in the grooves of the barrel.

**Powder Monkeys and Their Doings.** Loading With the black powder was at its best a dirty job, and when using the blank cartridges the men avoided it as much as they dared. Usually they had ten rounds served out to each of them and when the field exercises ended the catouch boxes were examined by an officer to see that they were empty. We boys knew that the men would, if possible, get rid of their cartridges in any but a legitimate way, and by spreading out along the line and keeping close up we seldom failed to get a response to "give me a cartridge, please." The men would throw the cartridges back to us, and we had sense enough to pick them up in a very casual way in case we would be seen by an officer. In this Way we collected a considerable quantity of powder, from Which We afterwards derived a good deal of dangerous amusement. I recollect that some one of us found an old rusty pistol barrel. This proved a treasure indeed. I fashioned out a gunstock and mounted the barrel on it, thus making a sporting gun that to our youthful minds possessed great possibilities for amusement. We purchased a quantity of shot, and also cast some bullets in a mould we were fortunate to get. We imagined that plenty of noise was the chief indication of the efficiency of our weapon, so we rammed home large charges of powder and shot. It required two to discharge the gun—one to hold it and take aim, and the other to touch off the priming with a match. We must have had a special guardian angel watching over us, as from the way in which we, in ignorance of the explosive power of the powder, hammered down the charge, under ordinary conditions the old rust-pitted barrel should have burst, with disastrous results.

**An Untimely Explosion.** We found several other uses for the powder, most of them of a dangerous character, but retribution came at last to one of our number, as it does to all bad boys in story books, and brought an abrupt end to our excursions after ammunition. At Merton's school ground there was a solid post in the fence, in the top of which we drilled a large hole, and a small hole leading into it from the side, thus making a Wooden cannon. We used touch paper in the touch hole, made by dipping the paper in saltpetre water.

One morning we had the cannon well charged, but it failed to go off. A boy named Anthony Barnard went to see the reason why, and the charge exploded in his face. Fortunately it missed his eyes, but his face was badly scorched, and his eyelashes, eyebrows, and a shock of red hair that usually hung over his forehead were a shrivelled ruin, Anthony was certainly a sorry, and to our young and apprehensive minds, a horrifying specimen of retribution which we had to present to Mr Merton. We also had our time of tribulation at the hands of master and parents, and as the result, of a military enquiry the volunteers got themselves into a fine old row for wasting their ammunition. To our minds the most serious outcome was our being prohibited from ever entering the drill ground again. It was hard to bear.

The Governor's Visit. A visit from Sir George Grey, Governor of New Zealand, in the year 1866, shortly after the local Volunteers were equipped with their uniforms and accoutrements, was made the occasion of a full turn out of the Company, and a brave show it made. As it transpired, however, the display was not without its humorous side. It was the afternoon of a very warm day, and the Company, headed by the Brass Band in full blast, marched down the Woodend Road to opposite Howard's brewery, Where a halt was made ready to act as the Governor's guard of honour and escort him to the township. From what afterwards transpired, the men no doubt regarded the spot where they halted to have been an admirable selection. Sir George, according to schedule, had on his way from Christchurch to stop at Tuahiwi to lay the foundation stone of the Maori church. His Excellency was particularly esteemed by the Maoris, and they were loath to let him leave them, consequently his arrival at Rangiora was delayed. It was thirsty Weather, and many of the volunteers had pretty well primed themselves with alcoholic refreshment before falling in. They still had some capacity left, however, and by invitation of Mr Howard the Company was marched into the brewery yard, where an unlimited supply of his best brew was served out in buckets. A man with a telescope was posted in the upper storey of the Cam Mill to keep the Governor's movements in sight, and when he flagged the joyful signal that his Excellency was on the way some of the guard of honour had imbibed more beer than they could carry with the decorum befitting the occasion. However, by skilful manoeuvring by the officers, the Company was drawn up in line for inspection. His Excellency arrived, the Band played the National Anthem, and his inspection of the ranks completed, the march commenced, and so did the fun. In the lead was a character known to all as little Dan Griffiths. On the score of being a Crimean veteran he demanded the right to lead the troops. To wear on the important occasion he had made himself a helmet of straw, the shape of a bottle envelope, Which sat jauntily on his head, and he carried a rusty old sabre which he declared he had used with remarkable effect on the Crimean battle-fields, and would be ready to wield it again if the Maoris showed fight.

On the March. With Dan in the lead, and some of the amateur soldiers unsteady on their feet, the cavalcade made a never-to-be forgotten picture. It is said that the Governor smiled occasionally when he viewed his gallant escort from the elevation of his carriage. Of course, the boys were trotting

along beside the troops enjoying the fun. I very distinctly recollect the figure cut by one man. He was suffering badly from liquor clairvoyance, and in that condition could see obstacles in his path hidden from the sober eye. Every few steps he would lift his feet in German goose-step action, but rather more pronounced, to clear the objects mystic to all but himself, and thus he lurched along, fortunately without a fall, which all the time impended. The town was beflagged and decorated for the occasion as never before, and a triumphal arch constructed of greenery from the bush spanned the road near Johnston's corner, forming a monument of all night labour on the part of a body of loyal citizens. My memory is hazy as to how the first official turn-out of the Volunteers ended, but as for his Excellency, I have no doubt he found a haven of rest and refreshment at the residence of Mr H. Blackett, Chairman of the Road Board.

A Moving Incident. There is another incident in the history of the Company to relate. Seemingly there was no restriction as to height or general fitness for service to bar recruits from joining the Volunteers, otherwise little Bobby Dann would certainly have been barred. Bobby had a body of medium length, but very short legs, and furthermore, he was mentally weak. Owing to the shortness of his legs he could not keep pace or in step with the other men, and they regarded him as a nuisance. In the Company there was a radical of a fellow, always up to some devilment, and he declared one day that he would give Bobby a shock that would teach him to move along smartly. What did he do but load his rifle with a full charge of powder, and falling in behind Bobby, waited his chance to carry out his purpose. The Company was on the march to the rifle range in the Ashley riverbed by way of what is now the East Belt, when suddenly there was the report of a rifle, and Bobby was minus the seat of his pants and the tail of his sark, and had suffered such bodily damage that he was compelled to take his meals standing until such time as kindly nature and the doctor's ointment renewed the skin he lost so tragically. Of a surety the shot moved him on, right out of the ranks for ever, and the practical joker had a similar experience, but without the help of a charge of powder. A court-martial was held and he was sentenced to be drummed out of the Company. The sentence was carried out with all the traditional rites attached to it, this being the first and last time a ceremony of the kind ever took place in North Canterbury, or probably in the province.

As far as I can gather from the Army and Volunteer lists published in the Southern Provinces Almanac year by year, Captain Brandon relinquished the command of the Rangiora Company in the early part of 1867, and for a short time Lieutenant Horatio Dudding had charge. Horatio (a name reminiscent of the hero of Trafalgar) was a small but very assertive individual with a penchant for politics, his avowed object in the study of which was preparation for a call to the Upper House of Parliament, the Lower House being somewhat beneath his dignity. In time he disappeared from Rangiora, where his political aspirations were a constant source of amusement, but his name never appeared with the handle M.L.C. attached to it.



Something Personal. Captain James Poole was the next officer to command the Company, his appointment dating from 22nd July, 1867. I had a close personal interest in this gentleman. He was my first employer, and the one that unwittingly placed my feet at the age of about 10 years on the path that led me to a journalistic career. Incidentally, too, he led me to take a keen interest in the liquor traffic, as my income depended upon it. It all came about in this Way: —

Mr Poole Was the agent for the “Lyttelton Times” Company, and also correspondent to the “Times.” His duties included the delivery of the paper in the township and neighbourhood on its arrival by coach at 6 p.m. He was a genial little fellow, but had an unfortunate failing in being a too earnest devotee of Bacchus, the god of Wine. His devotional exercises at the shrine of that ancient gentleman, to wit the Red Lion Hotel, sometimes exceeded the limit of Wisdom and capacity, with the result that his legs refused to do their important part in the purveyance of the news to the waiting public. This is where I came into the picture. I was his understudy, as it were, in so far as the paper was concerned, and when my principal’s legs refused to functional had to be their substitute, and do the round. It was a pretty tough job, especially on a cold winter evening, with rough roads and no lamps. Besides doing the township I had to walk halfway to the Cam Mill, and well into Southbrook—a round altogether of about four miles. It was not long before I became expert at judging as to whether my principal had arrived at a condition that necessitated my services, and my motto had to be that adopted years later by the Fire Brigade, viz. “always ready.” A time came when my principal’s reports to the office for publication became so unintelligible that the compositors refused to set them up, and a new correspondent had to be found. Eventually I secured the delivery round and carried on for some years until I undertook more important duties for the “Lyttelton Times” Company.

Conclusion. In 1869 Captain Poole was succeeded in the command of the Volunteers by Captain C. J. Merton, eldest son of Mr Charles Merton, and his first assistant in the school. Two years later Captain Merton resigned, hwing entered the ministry of the Church of England, and in the almanac of 1872 it is recorded that the Company was under command of Captain C. Pemberton, who had been Lieutenant in the Kowai Company. The Maori War hwing come to an end, and Great Britain being at peace with the world, the enthusiasm over volunteering commenced to wane, and by the middle, seventies all the northern companies except perhaps Kaiapoi had disbanded. What became of the Oxford No. 10 Company I don’t know. After the notification of its establishment in April 1867, it is not again mentioned in the Canterbury Volunteer list. The total strength of all branches of the service in Canterbury in 1871 was commissioned officers 43, non-commissioned officers 46, and private 463. In 1885 the Russian designs on India gave volunteering another fillip, and it was then that a new Rifle Volunteer Company was formed in Rangiora with modern weapons, and flourished until the Territorial system came into force.

## Part XIX. 'THE HAUNTED HOUSE'

FROM Mr C. Hunnibell, an old Rangiora boy who lives in Pasadena, California, I have received a message enjoining me not to forget to mention the haunted house. I certainly overlooked it in my description of the north side of the main street. My memory slipped a cog when I ended at Mr S. Stephens' Plough Inn. Haunted houses are usually associated with gruesome deeds of antiquity, but our alleged ghost walked under modern conditions, as befitting a new country; and without the setting of a tragedy. The house of sinister character was owned and built by Mr J. Barker, who erected the first church. It stood a short distance beyond the Plough' Inn, beside what is known as Norfolk's Gully. For some reason Mr Barker never occupied it, and as years went on it became surrounded with broom, gorse, and other vegetation. At last a whisper went around that the place was haunted, and its appearance certainly bore out the character given it. In the minds of the kiddies it became a firm conviction that a real ghost had possession of the house, and not one was brave enough to go near it, while at night they were careful to go past on the other side of the road. In common with other boys, I had a strong desire to explore the place, but curiosity was overcome by fear of the supernatural, even in broad daylight. On one occasion the old house came into the limelight owing to two men being dealt with at the Magistrate's Court for breaking into it and stealing some tools Mr Barker had stored there. Eventually the house was demolished, and the alleged ghost had to seek new quarters.

A Remarkable Surgical Operation. Mentioning Norfolk's Gully reminds me of a remarkable case of amateur surgery in the early days related to me by Henry Norfolk, after whom the Gully was named. The establishment of the sawmilling industry at Oxford accounted for a large amount of dray traffic between that township and Rangiora, teams of both horses and bullocks being constantly on the road hauling timber and stores. Usually there would be from two to four teams travelling together, and it was the custom to make a stay at the Cust Hotel for refreshment for man and beast. This was not always wise, and on the occasion of my story one of the draymen slipped off his load descending the incline between Oust and Springbank, and fell to the ground. There were three other drays in the string, and the drivers of these, of whom Mr Norfolk was one, hurried to the spot where the accident occurred, and found their companion lying helpless with his neck twisted. It was evidently dislocated, and after discussing the situation they decided that as the man was as good as dead it would not do him any further harm if an attempt was made to straighten his neck. It was a case of kill or cure —and they set about the operation. Putting the patient's head through the spokes of a dray wheel, they slipped it down until it was tightly wedged, and then gave his body a pull. The vertebra; bones went in with a click. The man regained consciousness, and after medical treatment for a time made a complete recovery. Mr Norfolk vouched for the operation as a positive fact well authenticated at the time. Perhaps our local medicos will make a note of this as being a successful way of dealing with dislocated necks.

The Road Steamer. I have been asked not to forget the road steamer, a novelty in road traction which at the time evoked much interest, particularly to the children, who used to run from near and far to follow it along the road. It was the forerunner of the traction engine or road locomotive, and was imported in the early seventies and bought by Mr R. Blake, who afterwards resided in and gave the name to what is now Blake Street. Probably it was the only steamer that came to Canterbury. The engine was put on the road between Christchurch and Oxford to haul timber and firewood. It had a large vertical boiler like that of our old steam t fire engine, and steered by a single s pivoted wheel in front, it was able d to turn in a very small space. The great novelty of the engine was in the elastic tyres of the wheels, adapting them to pass over loose stones and slippery surfaces. In fact, this was one of the first experiments at using rubber for tyres. The tyres were 12 inches wide and 4½ inches thick. Outside they were protected with an endless band of steel cross-bars, which yielded with the tyre to inequalities of the ground. Two men operated the engine, one sitting in front and steering, and the other at the rear being the driver, Mr Blake acting in that capacity. The engine towed one or two trucks, but it did not prove a success. For one thing its weight damaged bridges, and for another the fuel consumption was too heavy, although wood was used chiefly. Only three or four trips were made and Rangiora saw it no more. Mr Blake afterwards drove the locomotive used on the Oxford-Rangiora line during its construction.

Tin-kettling Again. Further to the tin-kettling of Mr John Anderson and his bride and its unfortunate sequel for some of the performers, I have been reminded that I did not complete my story. There should have been added that when the seven days' prisoner arrived home after his release from Lyttelton Gaol he was met at the railway station by the members of his tin-kettling band, who played him to the Institute Hall, where he was entertained at high tea. The hero of the incident -was familiarly known as Tom Nicholas. He was a pretty lively lad, but generally liked. In later years he came under the influence of the Salvation Army, and served loyally in its ranks for many years. As a member of a tin-kettling band I did my musical bit with a cow-bell. An engaged was a constant source of interest to the band, and the announcement of the nuptial day being fixed was as much a time of rejoicing to the members as it was to the happy couple. As a rule we met with a generous reward for our music, often, probably, with the idea that it would be an inducement for a quick move on. We had some very pleasant recollections of our serenades. For instance, when Sergeant Charles Davis brought his bride home to the police station the band turned out in full force, and gave him a special programme from our repertoire, with biscuit tin valuations, tin whistle obligatos, and cowbell and Jew's-harp arias, while the double bass oil drum did its part with profound effect. Lovers of classical music with a lively imagination might have detected that we were giving a very free rendition of the well-known composition, "The Storm." Our only failure was our inability to reproduce the twittering of the birds when the clouds rolled away, but we improvised other nature sounds of a more clamorous description to greet the reappearance of the sun. It is not to be wondered at that Charlie and his bride

responded nobly to our supreme musical effort, with wine and cake galore, and that our good-night melody was "For they are jolly good fellows."

A Sad and Smelly Episode. After all, music is nothing but wild sounds, and we did our best to civilise them into time and tune with the primitive instruments at our command. Sometimes we serenaded people who lamentably failed to appreciate artistry in producing a "concord of sweet sounds." On one occasion we struck a particularly bad snag, in lively contrast to the reception we had at the Police Station. A certain prominent business man of the town, who possessed not the ennobling instincts of Mr Blackett, whose veneration of the ancient custom of tin-kettling I have already chronicled, gave the hand of a daughter in marriage to another man of business, and we concluded it to be an occasion on which we might expect score a successful serenade, seeing that the bridegroom was in the confectionery trade, and the bride's father a baker. In consequence of this happy trades association we had no doubt about a good supply of cake being available, but we had serious misgivings regarding the wine. Nevertheless we sallied forth on our musical mission, bent on doing our one kind deed of the day, like all good scouts, and well primed with the brand of hope that springs eternal in the human breast. We commenced our performance, but met with no response. We rendered another item at double forte, but still without result. Then our hope began to fail to spring to schedule, in fact internally it slumped badly. At last an upper door in a gable of the business section of the house opened, and our hope made a joyful bound from the abysmal depths to which it had sunk, and we gazed upwards with eager expectations of refreshment at last. The son of the household appeared at the door with a bucket in his hand. Could it be—yes, it must be—a liberal supply liquor of some kind. Thus spoke the welcome bearer of the bucket: "You fellows seem to expect something to eat and drink; just take this and divide it amongst you." And with that he cast the contents of the bucket over us.

We received it all right, and it was well divided, but woe to us—the refreshment we expected was a well assorted sample of the contents of the pig tub. It was certainly a deed in which it was more cursed to give than it was blessed to receive. We retired in confusion, a very sad and a very smelly party. It was moonlight, and behind a gorse fence on the opposite side of the road we spent a most, unhappy half-hour scraping each other down with our pocket knives and otherwise endeavouring to effect repairs. One of our band, Tom Melbourne by name, who will be remembered by old residents, was wearing for the first time an Inverness overcoat with cape. He was envied by all as the possessor of this, but he was unfortunate enough to receive a good deal more than his share of the unsavoury gift, and when we looked him over we no longer coveted the coat. While we scraped the question of vengeance was discussed. It was an injury that required very signal revenge. Nothing short of murder or arson was suggested, and Tom hwing signified, in lurid language, his intention to burn down our enemies' place of abode whatever else was decided upon, it was agreed to leave it to him, seeing that he was the next-door neighbour, with special facilities to carry out his purpose, and further he had received the largest- quota of pigswill. Tom was reiterating his vow to

do the deed when a head came over the fence, much to our consternation. It was Enemy No. 1. "Burn my house down," said he; "that's a matter for the police. ' I'll take out a summons against all of you tomorrow." Here was a serious development that demanded most calm consideration. It seemed as if Vengeance was about to double-cross us. The police were a factor we had not taken into account, and the Magistrate's Court, surrounded with sinister mystery, was a real terror to us. "We became very humble in spirit, and we remembered precepts taught in our Sunday School that under the circumstances it would be the best policy to apply. We decided to forgive our enemies, and do good unto them, inasmuch as we would refrain from burning down their home. In this chastened and religious frame of mind, after having scraped from our clothes vegetable vitamins designed to fatten the pigs, in quantity and greater variety than ever discovered by Dr Thacker in his green leaf life, we took our several ways home deeply apprehensive of what would happen when our parents smelt us. My brother and I, when we carried home the aroma of our adventure, we were prohibited from ever indulging in tin-kettling again. All next day we were in fear and trembling at the prospect of a visit from the police, but our minds were relieved when we received news that the bride's mother, who possessed more of the milk of human kindness than her husband, hung on to his coat tail and prevented him from going to the police. It is interesting to add that the death of the bridegroom at the advanced age of 90 appeared in the papers recently. The heavy penalty in the Anderson case put a check on the tin-kettling custom, and eventually it practically died a natural death.

Securely Spliced. I presume that those of you who have been reading my reminiscences did not overlook Mr Cunningham's remarkable feat in marrying a couple without their knowledge. Here is another noteworthy wedding incident, in which a couple became very securely tied together: When Mr Cunningham took an annual month's holiday, Mr E. It. Good officiated in his absence as Registrar of Marriages. He was in the midst of a very busy afternoon in his shop when in came a young couple to be married. This was a duty on the part of Mr Good that had to be given precedence to his business, although he reluctantly left the counter. But no doubt he consoled himself with the thought of the fee quickly to be earned. In the seclusion of his office he briskly joined the couple in matrimony, and having done all that the law expected of him he gently hinted that the fee was now payable, and he would like to get back to business. "But, Mr Good," said the bride, "you don't mean to say that we are married." "Certainly," replied Mr Good, "I can't do any more for you." "What about the marriage service," rejoined the lady. "We are not properly married until the service is read. You won't get paid and we won't leave your office unless you read the service." Mr Good remonstrated in vain, and at last decided that the quickest way out of the difficulty would be to comply. So he obtained his prayer book and settled down to do the job. Before he commenced, however, the bride had another shot at him: "Now, Mr Good," she said, "don't you skip a word. You will have to read the whole lot before you are paid." With this understanding Mr Good commenced the role of parson, and the whole ceremony was carried through, the vows being renewed and the ring placed on the bride's finger. I'll wager that with one eye on the

prayer book, the other on the fee, and his mind on his shop, Mr Good went through the ceremony in record time. I cannot relate for certain, however, whether he emulated Archdeacon Dudley at the close by saluting the bride with an ecclesiastical kiss.

## Part XX THE TOWN'S GREAT BUSINESS ASSET.

THERE can be no gainsaying the assertion that the Weekly market has been the greatest factor in the progress and prosperity of Rangiora, and my reminiscences should include some account of its establishment and progress. In the year 1860 Mr George Elmer commenced to hold auction sales at Woodend and Rangiora at irregular intervals, but giving rip business, a year later, he went to the West Coast. Then there came on the scene Mr William Buss, Who arrived in Lyttelton by the ship Roman Emperor in 1860, being then 20 years of age. He was attracted to Rangiora, and before he was two years older he decided to make a venture in auctioneering. The main difficulty he had to contend With Was lack of finance, his principal asset being his voice. He had no banking account because lie had no security to offer. However, he felt confidence in the district as a coming business centre, and working hard, early and late, he gradually built up his business. At one time Mr Buss used to relate how ha borrowed money on a three months bill at 15 per cent, interest to carry on. Being impressed with his energy and business ability, the bank people in time gave him the financial assistance he required. Ultimately they used to send farmers to Mr Buss for financial help, and backed by the bank, he was able to give What Was asked for, to the mutual benefit of all.

An Auctioneering Record. Mr Buss Was fortunate in securing a central position for his saleyards, and there for 42 years he wielded the auctioneer's hammer, and could lay claim at the end to holding the New Zealand record for length of business in that capacity. At one time he had for a partner Mr W. Hepworth, who I mentioned in one of my articles as hwing paid Dr Downes's bill in coppers, but the partnership existed for only a short time. As could be expected, Mr Buss had to meet opposition in business. In a previous article I referred to his first rival in the person of Mr W. H. Percival, Who established a quarterly fair on January 7, 1866, for the disposal of live and dead stock, on the lines of fairs of the Homeland. However, the venture failed to compete successfully With Mr Buss's regular sales, then held fortnightly, and it was abandoned before the end of the year. Mr F. M. Rickman also conducted stock sales in yards adjoining those belonging to Mr Buss, but he too failed to establish himself permanently in the business.

North Canterbury Saleyards Co. In the beginning of the new century Mr Buss had the most formidable opposition of his career in the North Canterbury Saleyards Co. Ltd., formed with a capital of £2500 in £1 shares. Captain A. Parsons was the first chairman of directors, and Mr J. B. Sheath secretary. Extensive yards and a saleroom were erected on land bordering on High Street, but now a closely populated part of Ayers Street, and business shared by Christchurch auctioneers, opened with much promise. The Company Was

fairly supported for a time, but it had a dragging existence which terminated in 1906 by liquidation. Its failure was mainly brought about by sheep being purchased in the Company's yards on account of Mr Buss, who had them immediately driven to his own yards, where he re-sold them at an advanced figure, thus demonstrating to the farmers the advantage of supporting the old market. Mr Buss adopted the plan of always having sheep in his paddocks that could be brought to his yards should the entry fall short of expectation, and by that means a good yarding was always assured; a great contrast to the present day experience of the pens sometimes -being almost empty.

End of a Long Business Career. The end of Mr Buss's business career was brought about by a breakdown in his health, and he disposed of his interest in the saleyards to the North Canterbury Stores Company as from January 18, 1902. The turn-over was marked by a great demonstration of farewell to Mr Buss in the large woolstore beside Paddy's Market. Not long afterwards the market passed into the hands of the N.Z. Farmers' Cooperative Association through amalgamation With the Stores Company, but eventually the management of the yards was taken over by an association of stock auctioneers.

Although Mr Buss led a very busy life he found, time to act as secretary and treasurer to the Northern Agricultural and Pastoral Association for some years, and finally as president for three terms, but he took little active part in other public affairs. After he retired from business he took up his residence in Christchurch, but he never regained good health, his death taking place on October 16, 1908.

A Kindly Scot. Reference to Mr Buss's business career would not be complete without mention being made of Mr Thomas Ross, who was his right-hand man in his office for many years. Mr Ross, who was a kindly Scot of a fine type, was held in the highest esteem by his employer and all his clients. Under his able management the large volume of office work was carried on in a smooth and expeditious manner that gave the highest satisfaction to all concerned. During the time Mr Buss was secretary of the Northern A. and P. Association Mr Ross relieved him of a large portion of the work, especially in preparation for the show. He was widely known in his connexion With the North Canterbury Caledonian Society While it existed, being at one time president; and his services as judge of Highland events at sports gatherings were in much request. Mr Ross's death took place unexpectedly on April 30, 1903, after only three or four days' illness; and his passing was deeply deplored by his host of friends in North Canterbury and elsewhere. We have his daughter, Miss Ross, of Victoria Street, still residing among us.

Some Notable Pioneers. Education had a prominent place in the prospectus of the Canterbury Church of England Settlement, and amongst the pioneers of the 'fifties there was a considerable number who had attended the Universities and the famous public schools of the Homeland. Many of these men had been trained for professional careers for which there was little opening to prosecute in the new land. However, they were ready and willing

to turn their hands to pioneering work of any kind, and it was on this account that the Rangiora Settlement counted amongst its inhabitants several who afterwards became prominent in public life in Christchurch. Of these may be mentioned the brothers Hamilton and Crosbie Ward, Messrs T. Townsend, G. Hanmer, W. Reeves, John Shrimpton, W. Reeves, and T. W. Maud. The bush was the attraction, and most of the foregoing took a hand at bush work. Mr Maud drove a dray between Rangiora and Christchurch carting timber, and he was specially popular with the settlers in consequence of his kindness in giving them lifts in his dray, and doing business for them in Christchurch. He afterwards became clerk to the Provincial Council, and on the abolition of the Provinces he established a law practice in Christchurch which he carried on for many years. Messrs Crosbie Ward and W. Reeves, after a year or two's experience at bullock punching and other bush work, entered into partnership and acquired the "Lyttelton Times" from its first proprietor, Mr Ingram Shrimpton, and no doubt they found journalism more congenial than their previous, laborious occupation.

**Bullock Quay Episode.** There was one incident in Mr Reeves's bullock-punching days that no doubt remained as long in his memory as it did in that of the settlers. There was an art in loading a bullock dray to get a good balance to ease the weight off the polers' necks. Mr Reeves, before he gained experience, one day loaded his dray with too much weight behind, and no sooner did he make a start on his outward journey than a wheel struck a small stump and down went his dray in the rear, and up went the dray pole, with the bullocks dangling on it by their yokes. Fortunately there were some bushmen handy to rescue the bullocks from strangulation. Mr Ingram Shrimpton, it may be mentioned, after disposing of his paper, also became a resident of the district, joining his brother John in farming at Southbrook. Messrs Crosbie and Hamilton Ward built their house at the lower end of what is now King Street, not far from the bit of scrub that still remains, the only relic of the bush. Let me digress here for a moment to say that my father bought the last tree, a dead black pine, to be felled in the bush, from amongst this patch of scrub, and had it cut up for firewood. It was not long before Mr Hamilton Ward followed his brother to Christchurch, and there found employment more fitted for his educational attainments. After many years the house they built was destroyed by fire while in the occupation of Mr J. Donovan.

**A Singular Coincidence.** It was in connexion with the old house that I experienced a singular coincidence. Mr Hamilton Ward had a son named Tom who was a popular lad in the community for his usefulness in riding into Kaiapoi for the mail, before a regular mail service was organised. Amongst a number of old photographs, I have one of Wards' house, taken many years after they left it. This photograph had been lying in a cupboard in my office untouched for some years until one day in 1914 I took it out to show it, with some other old photos, to a friend. While it was lying on the office counter an elderly gentleman walked in and after saying that he believed he knew my father in the early days, added with a smile; "I was pretty well known as Tom Ward. I have not been in Rangiora since I left 40 years ago." I picked up the



photograph, and handing it to him, asked if he recognised the place. It was hardly in his hand before he exclaimed: "Why, it's the old home; how remarkable that you should have it handy when I came in after 40 years' absence." I rejoined, that the coincidence was the more strange from the fact of the photograph not having been out of the cupboard for some years. It is almost needless to add that we had an interesting chat on experiences of the pioneer days. Mr Ward had just retired after 40 years in the Government service.

**Intelligence at a Discount.** Some of the early settlers who had come from small villages in the Old Country, where the Dame's school was the only source of education, had no very exalted idea of the degree of intelligence necessary for a school teacher to possess. This was exemplified by an incident that occurred at the Church of England School when in the charge of Mr C. G. Chapman, the successor to Mr C. Merton. One day there came to the school an old gentleman and his son, both well known in the township. I was sitting close to the door, and heard the conversation that took place. On Mr Chapman asking their business, the father explained thus: "Mr Chapman, this is my son Tom. He is twenty-five years of age, and I have tried him at various occupations but he has been a failure at every one of them. I have come to the conclusion that he is too big a fool for any tiling, but I have just brought him along to see if you can make a school teacher out of him." Mr Chapman was tickled with the humour of the request, so naively put, and told the father to send his son along on the following Monday morning, and he would see what could be done for him. Tom duly put in an appearance on the Monday, but his mentality and education being much below standard, at the end of three days he had added another failure to his list. He afterwards went to work in the Oxford bush, where he made his final failure in not getting out of the way of a falling tree, which killed him.

**An Esteemed Personality.** Amongst my pleasant recollections of school life were the happy relations that existed with Mr Chapman, the headmaster, during the two years I was under him at the Church School, and afterwards at Earnley Academy, his private school. Mr Chapman possessed a most genial disposition, and although firm in his discipline, his pleasant manner and kindness to his scholars won their affection, which was shown in their earnest desire to refrain from doing anything that could displease him. In stating this I am sure it will meet with the endorsement of those of his pupils who are living in Rangiora today. He was exceptionally short of stature, but chubby, with a rather more than normal equatorial measurement, while his cherubial face made him a most attractive personality. In his day almost every man wore a beard, but he had a perfectly smooth face, and as far as we scholars could see there was nothing to show that he used a razor, consequently we thought he was very young, although he was in middle life. Like many another short man, he married a very tall wife, and when they walked out together strangers who took them for mother and son instead of man and wife could be pardoned. Regarding his stature Mr Chapman used to tell with a laugh that when he was residing at Earnley he was in the orchard and attempted to gather a peach for a little boy with him. It was just beyond his reach, and the boy, watching

his vain effort, said: "Mr Chapman, you will have to grow up to be a man before you can reach as high as that peach." Mr Chapman's death from peritonitis after about two days' illness caused a great shock in the town. Over his grave there is a monument erected by his old scholars, and other admirers.

## Part XXI. The Great Flood of '68

MY reminiscences would be far from complete if I failed to give some account of the great flood of '68. Ever since that disastrous visitation old settlers, have never failed to recall it for comparison with overflows of the River Ashley that have occurred since. When the flood is spoken of the inference is that it was a local one, but such was not the case. As a matter of fact, practically the whole of the country with an eastern aspect from Marlborough to Southland was more or less flooded. This was the result of an exceptionally heavy downpour of rain from the south-east, which commenced on Sunday, February 2, and continued almost without cessation until the evening of the next day. The rain was a singular one, inasmuch as it was so general throughout the South Island and had similar results where it fell. By the Monday evening all the rivers were overflowing and flooding the country in their vicinity, doing enormous damage. It is rather remarkable that with so much country under water there were so few lives lost, but of course it has to be remembered that the population at the time was sparse. As far as I can gather, the fatalities were two children drowned at Southbrook, a man near Timaru and a man, wife and family on the Taieri plains who were carried away and their bodies never found, being probably buried in silt.

Floods of Pre-Pakeha Days. According to a statement made to Mr Leech by an old Maori, the Canterbury flood was not the most extensive up to that time, but it has not been equalled since. ' The Maori's story was that 60 years before the '68 flood there occurred an overflow from the Ashley and Waimakariri that inundated the whole country between the hills to the north-west of Rangiora and the Port Hills, and the natives had to take to their canoes. The flood water passed over where Christchurch is now located, and round the base of the hills into Lake Ellesmere. Another old Maori used to recount an experience of the Ashley flowing through the Rangiora bush. There is no doubt that many times in past ages the Ashley flooded the country in a south-easterly direction, forming shingle strata, and gradually raising the face of the land. I recollect that many years ago, when a well was being sunk on land at the south end of Ivory Street, at a depth of about ten feet an old swamp bed was found that has been buried probably for ages. Again, a hole was being opened not long ago on Mr Chas. Leech's farm to bury a dead beast, and six feet down a bed of niggerheads and other dead swamp growth was met with. Both these cases clearly indicate that the swamps had been buried with soil washed over them by the Ashley River.

Cause of the Flood. But to return to the flood of '68 and its results as affecting the district in which we are specially interested: Towards the Monday evening the Ashley was overflowing in places, and water was finding its way down to

Fernside, but it was not till 10 p.m. that the worst came. What happened to cause the culmination of the flood is only a matter of conjecture. Some credited it to a cloud burst on the hills. Another theory was that a landslide in the bush along the bank of the river in the gorge formed a dam which held for a time, and then bursting with the pressure of the accumulated water, which, rushing out of the gorge and meeting the great flow of water from the Okuku, Garry, and Makerikeri Rivers entering the Ashley at right angles, caused a huge wave to sweep over the Fernside district and right down to Kaiapoi. I have always been inclined to the dam theory for the reason of the enormous quantity of trees and other bush growth that came down the river. Mr J. Thompson, a well-known schoolmaster of the early days, who had charge of the Ashley School at the time, stated that, looking across the river from the Ashley side, the stream, flowing bank high, was so covered with floating trees that it appeared to be bridged from bank to bank. For some years after the flood the Rangiora people drew their firewood supply from the river-bed, so thickly was it scattered about. There was one incident in connexion with the floating trees with a touch of humour in it. A fine rooster was observed perched on a branch, and every now and again the bird crowed lustily, seemingly enjoying his river trip. Evidently he belonged to the same indomitable breed as the old sea captain famed in song for playing his ukulele as the ship went down.

A Flood Wave. So much for the theory of the cause of the flood. Now regarding its disastrous effects. Caught unawares in the night by the sudden visitation of water, the plight of the settlers on the plains can easily be imagined. The wave of water when it first came was about 3 feet high, but it increased in height until it was over the tops of any fences that withstood the onrush. Most of the fences on the smaller holdings were, however, of sods topped with gorse, and these were soon swept away. It was harvest time, and the whole of the crops in the path of the flood were destroyed, and any new-built stacks were floated bodily away. A stack on Mr A. Ivory's farm at Fernside, now occupied by Mr W. Smith, on which there was a litter of pigs, came to rest with its live burden at Southbrook, at the corner of the main road and what is now the south belt. Another stack I saw planted in the road at Southbrook opposite the Masonic Hotel, quite upright and little the worse for its trip from Mr J. C. Boys's farm nearly a mile distant. Other stacks could be seen in the distance on the Flaxton road. The fact that these stacks floated over fence tops will give some idea of the depth of the flood water.

Great Force of the Flood. The force of the onrushing wave at Fernside was so great that drays and heavy farm implements were carried a considerable distance, an iron plough on Mr H. Blackett's farm being found ten chains from where it had been left. Everything that would float was carried on the crest of the wave and scattered over the country when the water subsided houses and outbuildings collapsed and their contents were washed away. In making for safety some of the settlers were in danger of drowning, one particular case being that of Mr D. McIntyre and his wife and children, who were saved from being washed away by a gorse fence, and ultimately reached safety in a dray. The water at the time had swept the crockery off the dining table. The livestock

losses on the smaller holdings consisted chiefly of pigs and poultry, but Mr T. S. Mannering, who had the Fernside run, was said to have had 2,000 sheep drowned.

**The Wave Reaches Southbrook.** The wave reached Southbrook at about 11 o'clock at night, and the first to see it approaching was Mrs John Grimwood, wife of the proprietor of the Rangiora Flour Mills (now; Archer's). Some little time before, her husband, who had been working in the mill, went over to the Masonic Hotel, I presume to get a refresher. The rain had now ceased, and the moon was shining fitfully through the broken clouds. Mrs Grimwood went outside to see if her husband was coming, and hearing a strange noise looked in the direction of Fernside and saw the glitter of the moonlight on the approaching flood. Realising what it was, she ran towards the hotel screaming an alarm, and only a few minutes elapsed before the water was into the houses four or five feet in depth. Most of the houses in those days had an upper storey, to which the beleaguered people were able to retreat until the flood subsided. Some who were not so fortunately circumstanced were rescued from their houses and taken to Merton's schoolroom for the night. In the morning the flood had subsided considerably, and by the afternoon people were able to get about. It was a scene of desolation that met the eye. There was silt and debris everywhere, and caught in the fences and lying about the fields beyond Southbrook there were dead sheep, pigs, and poultry, and crops were flattened out and covered with silt. The bridge over the Southbrook Creek had been washed away and was caught against the corner of Steggall's mill. Mr Steggall was a heavy loser. His oatmeal kiln, built of cob, had collapsed, and a quantity of flour and wheat was damaged. Mr Grimwood also suffered a good deal of damage in his mill.

**Victims of the Flood.** The worst feature of all, however, was the drowning of two girls, one about 13, and the other 10, children of a settler named Wilkinson. The family was living on the Drain Road, about a mile from the Masonic Hotel. It was not until about 1 o'clock in the morning, when the flood was at its worst, that they made the unfortunate decision to abandon the home. Had they remained there would have been no loss of life, as the house, withstood the flood. When they left the house to make for the Masonic Hotel the water was over waist deep, according-to Mr Wilkinson's evidence at the inquest on one of his children. They struggled against the water for about half a mile, and then Iris wife and the children became confused and clung to him. He lost his footing, and all were washed off the road. He could remember nothing more until he found himself at daylight on a hillock within a few chains of the hotel. He coo-ee'd, and Mr Steggall answered, but could do nothing to rescue him until the water subsided. About 7 o'clock he thought he heard a sound, and this proved to be his wife, who was found in an exhausted condition when both were rescued. The body of the elder girl was found amongst a quantity of debris in a field some distance from the hotel. A search for the body of the other girl, in which all Merton's schoolboys took part, myself included, proved fruitless. It was not till some weeks later that the body was found by a man under some wheat which had been flattened down by the water.

How Rangiora Fared - How did Rangiora fare will be a natural question. Some people have an idea that the township was inundated from the river and much damage done. This was not the case, the place having evidently escaped the main overflow experienced at Fernside. The only Ashley water that found its way through the township came by way of the racecourse gully. The major volume from the gully found its way back into the river in the depression still existing on the River Road, a short distance from its junction with the Ashley Road. Where the water re-entered the river it washed out a deep hole in the bank, afterwards used for many years as a rubbish dump. Some distance up the gully there was a strong overflow which found its way through the farm now occupied by Mr F. Siddons on to the road. The water then flowed in a stream a few yards wide down to what is now the Bank of New Zealand corner, then crossed the main road, and went round the next corner into the Drain Road, down which it coursed into the Northbrook Creek. At daylight the next morning I saw the stream still running, about ten feet wide, but it ceased before the end of the day. Some of the people in the township were greatly alarmed at the menace from the river, and made for the Cam mill for safety. I recollect that my father went into the town to learn how things were, and came back quite satisfied that there was no danger of a flood. Of course there was a great quantity of storm water about the township, principally from the several gullies that ran through the place.

Kaiapoi Under Water. The effects of the flood were disastrous at Kaiapoi. The Ashley floodwater made its way into the Cam and north branch of the Waimakariri and added to the plight of the people, who before the Ashley water arrived were having a serious flood from their own river to contend with. The Cam bridge was washed away, and also the swing bridge over the river. Mr Samuel Ayers was the last to cross the bridge before it was carried away. He was on his way home to Woodend on horseback, and when he reached the bridge it was commencing to tilt up, and water was squirting through between the planks. The toll-keeper advised him not to attempt to cross, but he decided to make the venture, and safely reached the other side. A quarter of an hour later the bridge went downstream. Opposite the Pier Hotel the water was about six feet deep, and two men in danger of losing their lives were towed to safety by hanging to a horse's tail. Many of the residents of the town left their homes and found shelter amongst the natives at Tuahiwi, and at Woodend, both of these places having escaped the flood. Mr C. Leech told me that some days after the flood he saw the carcasses of dead sheep and pigs being carried round in the swirl of water where the Cam River joined the Waimakariri.

Damage at Saltwater Creek. Leithfield suffered from the overflow of the Kowai River, but the damage done was small compared with that sustained by the Saltwater Creek people. The Creek at the time was a busy little place, where several tradespeople found employment. It boasted two hotels, several business places, including a large, well-stocked general store belonging to D. and D. Cameron, and a school. An overflow from the Ashley joined the flood water in the vicinity, and did extensive damage to the houses, Cameron's store being carried 150 yards and then capsized and most of the contents ruined. The Creek bridge was carried away and a considerable amount of stock

drowned, one settler losing 23 head of cattle. For a long time after the flood there were scores of carcasses of dead stock scattered along the Waikuku and Woodend beaches, carried down to the sea by the Ashley. The North Road toll bridge over the Ashley was partly washed away, and a good deal of damage was done at Coldstream and in the Waikuku district. For the only time in the history of Christchurch flood water from the Waimakariri invaded the town, and did a considerable amount of damage. Some places were four feet under water.

What About the Future? When the flood occurred the waterway in the Ashley was entirely free from obstruction of any kind, and the - riverbed was several feet lower than at present. The north bank for most of its length was from 10 to 15 feet high, and there were well defined banks on the south side. When the first bridge was built on the road from Rangiora to Ashley a man on horseback could ride under it in places where, before the bridge was demolished, a man would have had to bend double to pass under it. It was also possible at one time to take a combine under the railway bridge. This goes to show how much the river-bed has been raised within the past fifty or sixty years by the accumulation of shingle brought down from the hills. When the flood occurred the main stream of the river was running at the end of the Ashley Road, having shifted from the north bank during a fresh. As one of those who have seen the river in its angry mood many times during the past seventy years I feel apprehensive as to what would happen with its bed raised, and so many man-made obstructions in its course, if a flood near the volume of that of 1868 occurred. In March 1902, we had a flood in the river after less than 24 hours' easterly rain that destroyed part of the railway embankment and damaged the line by washing out piles driven 30 feet into the shingle. There was also an overflow behind the Showgrounds that sent a large stream of water down the road and into the head of the Cam River, and a breach was made in the stopbank at the end of Bells Road. Again in May 1923 there was a heavy fresh which did considerable damage by overflow, and no longer ago than February 11, 1936, some of the Fernside farmers suffered seriously in the loss of crops through a flood which came from the river in the vicinity of the 1868 visitation. It is invariably all easterly rain falling on the face of the hills that causes floods in the Ashley, and there is room to doubt whether in the event of a thirty to forty hours' downpour from that direction the new embankments would prove sufficient safeguard from the big flood in the river that would inevitably occur.

## Part XXII. Youth on the Prow and Pleasure at the Helm

HOW did the young people find amusement in the early days is a pertinent question. I can say at once that we had a full measure of enjoyment of life, and probably were more contented with our lot than the children of the present day, surfeited with picture shows, dances, and so many other forms of entertainment. Perhaps once or twice a year Mr E. Seager would come from Christchurch and entertain us with his magic lantern. His visit was an event to be looked forward to with eager anticipation, and the pictures he screened were the subject of conversation for many days after, and lived long in our

memories, in fact I can see some of them in my mind's eye today. Then there were occasional concerts at which Mr Horniblow and his dulcimer with "auricular demonstration set us all alive," as he invariably promised; and the never-to-forgotten tea meetings, at which we "did full justice to the good things provided," as the newspaper man would describe our gastronomic performances. I must confess that we usually did a little more than "full justice," inasmuch as we did not eat all the good things at the table. Some that would bear carriage without disaster to our garments were smuggled away in our pockets to be consumed when nature in its internal operations had created a fresh and sufficient void to receive them.

Bathing in the creeks was the boys' chief summer amusement. Two of our chief resorts were streams crossing the Northbrook Road, and I am afraid we often exposed more bare skin to the passers-by than was considered proper in the mid-Victorian period. Occasionally we had a great treat in being taken to the Woodend sea beach. Our only means of conveyance was a horse and dray. This entailed a very early start, a long time being taken by the horse in plodding the seven mile journey. What was the fashion in bathing costumes in those days, will be asked. The answer to that is that the fashion was of a very diverse character in respect to colour, but rather limited in design, consisting as it did of a shirt and pair of old pants for the male species, and an old dress such as worn either night or day by the matrons and maids. Mrs Grundy took a very extreme view of the impropriety of paddling by the latter, with dresses raised to the knees, and such an indelicate act as sunbathing would have given the proverbial old lady an apoplectic fit. However, I am sure all enjoyed themselves as much as do the seaside Wearers of the brief costumes and pyjamas to be seen on the beaches in the present days. Mentioning our mode of conveyance reminds me of an outing that has always remained in my memory as one of the outstanding pleasures of my childhood—it was no less than a bullock dray ride to Woodend and back. It was on the afternoon of a Christmas Day that Mr Harry Carter, one of the best known of the bullock team proprietors of the pioneer days, loaded up his dray with children and took them on an excursion to Woodend. The journey there and back occupied the best part of the afternoon, and we all regarded it as a wonderful outing. I am sure that the pleasure we had from it was as keen as present day children would derive from a fifty mile motor ride; in fact I should say it would be more, being longer drawn out.

Kiss-in-the-Ring. A favourite summer evening and party pastime with the boys and girls Was the good old English game of kiss-in-the-ring. It was not the more formal game of later times of merely showing preference by dropping a handkerchief without a salute following, but real bona fide kissing in the ring. Let me say here that class distinction had no place amongst the young people in those days. Whether they were the children of the well-to-do or the poorer labouring people, they met on the same level, and in the game of kiss-in-the-ring they kissed each other as equals. It was good to live in those days: it was community life at its best.

We danced, too, but chiefly the old country folk dances taught by our elders, who had enjoyed them in the Homeland. In my mind's eye I can see Mr Breach, Whom I introduced to you as choir leader in "the Little Bethel," vigorously scraping away at his fiddle, and we boys and girls merrily capering around as if our lives depended on it.

Fishing and a Disastrous Sequel. Fishing in the many creeks and drains was a favourite pastime with the boys. Eels, lampreys, smelts, and even small flounders abounded, and in the bush streams there were -small crayfish to be caught from amongst the tree roots. . I recollect that on one occasion I was fishing, lying prone on a bridge crossing the creek near Burton Brewery when an enormous eel put its head out of a hole in the bank within two feet of my face and startled me. A few days after, it was speared with a pitch-fork, and was found to weigh 22lbs. Bobbing for eels at night was our most exciting fishing experience, and like all good anglers we could tell whoppers about fish of extraordinary length and weight we failed to land owing to something or other going wrong. There was a' disastrous sequel to one of our fishing expeditions. It came about in this way. My brother and I and a few companions had made a good catch of fine smelts, and we decided to cook them for afternoon tea. My father had a large pig run, and being of a humane disposition, and a carpenter with abundance of slab timber available, he built a commodious sleeping apartment for the pigs with the object of giving them as much comfort and happiness as possible during their allotted short span of life. The sty happened to be temporarily void of inhabitants, and we selected it for our fish tea, believing that the very nature of the place, with its unsalubrious surroundings, would be our safeguard from unsympathetic interference. We made a fire on the board floor of the pigs' place of repose, and using a tin pan, cooked our fish and duly disposed of them with much relish; then we departed. We thought we had safely quenched the fire, but sparks must have fallen through between the boards and started a smouldering fire in the litter below. About ten o'clock at night an alarm of fire was raised, and looking out of our bedroom window my brother and I saw our pigs' bedchamber and a high sheltering gorse fence making a bonfire that to our guilty consciences was an awe-inspiring spectacle. As the flames and sparks flew upwards, so did our prayers of repentance, and Casabianca on the burning deck could not have been filled with greater fear than we were at the consequence looming in the offing. We realised that our nightshirts, so easily adjustable for corporal punishment on the part of our anatomy provided for parental correction, would be no protection from the wrath to come, in the shape of dad's willow switch. We were trembling in bed when he returned from the scene of our iniquity, and we apprehensively listened to his comments on the disaster. It appeared that dad's workshop near the sty was saved by the contents of two pig tubs, which proved as effective as a present-day fire extinguisher. That we thought was something in our favour, and might ease the situation. "What started the fire?" questioned mum. "The police sergeant," replied dad, "has no doubt but that a swagger had been in the place and set fire to it when smoking." When we heard this verdict the weight lifted from our minds was colossal. The wisdom of the police sergeant was remarkably profound, and worthy of our whole-hearted support. Hearing dad making for



our bedroom, we discreetly went sound asleep immediately. Next morning we had to hear all about the fire, and when we were told of the swagger's nefarious part in the conflagration we conjured up several individuals of the kind we had seen about the town during the day, every one of whom we believed to have been a potential fireraiser. We saw to it that all our companions interested supported the swagger idea. However, the police sergeant's investigations had a negative result, and "cause unknown" was the final verdict. I might explain that the sergeant's son was one of the afternoon tea party. One result of the fire was that dad relinquished pig-keeping for ever.

A Homing Pig. An experience in connexion with his porcine industry is worth recounting as proof of pigs having the homing instinct well developed. He purchased two pigs from Mr Baugh, who in a previous article I mentioned as proprietor of the Rangiora Arms Hotel, which was situated opposite the Plough Inn. Placing one in a sack he wheeled it in a barrow to our place at the lower end of what is now Ivory Street. He turned the pig into the sty, and then had his tea. On going to the sty after tea the pig had disappeared, having found a hole in the fence. A search for the animal proved fruitless, and my father went to get the second pig. Imagine his amazement when he found the lost pig back in its old home. It had made its way across the fields, then fairly open, and mounting a heap of manure, had jumped into the sty. The distance it travelled was over a mile in a direct line, and it must have done the journey in quick time.

The "Gang." I should have explained earlier that our companionship consisted of a gang of about a dozen boys of congenial and fraternal nature, always ready to join in any frolic that promised amusement or other reward. I wish you to remember that we, with one exception, were good Sunday school boys, and several of us had the benefit of the long sermons at the Little Bethel, where I had a front seat. The exception was poor Tom, who, I have already related, received more than his share of vitamins at the tin-kettling. Tom had a nervous affliction that caused him to shake his head and spit every few minutes. Spittoons not being amongst the furnishings of church or Sunday school, Tom could not attend either, and in consequence he was regarded as being the unregenerate amongst us. We had in the course of our career as a gang made some enemies, but we tried to heap coals of fire on their heads. Tom, however, could not see the figurative sense of this: he favoured the more materialistic way of putting the coals under their houses.

Poor Tom. In looking back it seems to me a sad pity that the Church Vestry and Sunday School teachers were so indifferent to his need, which they might have filled by pooling their financial resources. In doing so they would have afforded him the opportunity to take his stand amongst us as another one with the urge to wear the white flower of a blameless life. I do not lose sight of the fact, however, of the churches' financial worry in connexion with the candle account. In the days of which I write the church was illuminated with candles. There were many candles, here, there, and everywhere. They were a source of concern to the Venerable Archdeacon. About once a quarter he would hold a candle box inspection, and audit the candle account. The

outcome would be what his congregation named his candle sermon. In this he would picture the void that existed in the box, and an account much below zero, and urge all to a supreme effort to dredge their pockets for a few extra silver coins to remedy the existing sad state of affairs, failing which they would be a people in jeopardy of sitting in darkness, yea, gross darkness. The people, however, thought their greater concern was to avoid sitting in candle grease. Mr Horniblow added his support to the Archdeacon in his efforts to impress the congregation with their duty. He constructed a chandelier of ornamental fretwork of such elaborate design that it vied in interest in our youthful eyes with his dulcimer. Hanging in a prominent place, it was an ever present reminder of the importance of church illumination. By the way, what has become of Mr Horniblow's gift? It should either be sent to the museum or placed in Mr Matthews's hands for decoration with his coloured electric lights. I am sure it would be a job he would love to do.

Performing a Public Duty. In the late sixties wandering stock on roads became such a nuisance that the Provincial Council adopted a regulation providing for the payment of 1/- per head for any animals impounded from roads. The gang heard of this and went into, conference. Surely a kindly Providence had influenced the Wise men who made the law. Evidently they expected every man to do his duty, and it was decided that we would not fail them. We got busy and the pound-keeper had to get busy, too. We rounded up plenty of stock at first, and duly collected our 1/- per head. The poundkeeper was happy because he too benefited from our industry. I feel confident that the regulation was not applied more thoroughly in any other part of the Province than it was in the Rangiora district. It was before the days of stock rangers, consequently we had all the business to ourselves. Naturally we made many enemies, but accepted the coals by putting any of their cattle we could catch into the pound where they could find them without having to search all over the roads. It was not very long before the public opinion of the stock owners, expressed with threats of personal violence, caused us to seriously consider the situation, and we deemed it wise to relinquish business for a season. Our only regret was that we had not the opportunity to take into temporary keeping a wandering mob of sheep which at a shilling a head would have been a prize worth while. For the sake of our good moral characters it was perhaps a fortunate thing there was not a mob in a nearby field with a gate handy.

First Display of Fireworks. We had carried on the impounding business as a syndicate, with the money earned pooled for use in some way. As a result of our industry we had a rather substantial sum in the treasury, and our minds were much exercised as to what good purpose we would put it to. Then came the unexpected solution of our difficulty. Two Chinamen came to the town and opened a shop for the sale of fireworks. Here was the opportunity to spend our money, and we did so to the last penny. The Chinamen smiled their happiness, and treated us well. We left them with a large and varied assortment of fireworks such as we had never imagined to exist. We had made crackers and bombs and what we called blue devils with the powder supplied us by the Volunteers, but our purchase included many promised spectacular devices hitherto unknown to us. We then proceeded to arrange for the first

display of fireworks ever made in the township. In the glebe belonging to the Church of England there happened to be a large quantity of dry rushes heaped high for burning. This we got permission to burn as a bonfire to wind up the evening's display. We issued verbal invitations to intimate friends and other favoured individuals to view the display, but for obvious reasons we carefully excluded all stock owners who had received our attention. Our display was a great success, and loud was the applause of those that witnessed it. The bonfire blazed high, and as a finale to the evening's entertainment it was used to roast potatoes for the gang's supper.

A Sad Fall From Grace. I have headed the story I am about to tell as a "sad" fall, but I am afraid my temperance friends will say I ought to have written "shocking." Of this I am confident: that it would have been one of the most impressive examples of the evil effects of drink amongst the young that a Band of Hope speaker could have revelled in, had a society of the kind existed at the time. There were only four of us connected with this incident —my brother and I, and two cousins. Mr William Ivory, the nurseryman, grew a large number of quick plants annually from berries gathered from hawthorn hedges planted in the very early days. The berries were ripe, and we contracted with Mr Ivory to gather them at a price we considered to be remunerative. The scene of our operations was to be Mr Pentecost's farm at the extreme southwest of the district, and a considerable distance from home, where large crops were annually produced. We expected to need liquid refreshment. My father, I must here explain, was a Devonshire man, and an expert at cider making. He had stored away several bottles of a very old make, which by special treatment and ago had developed to the potency of champagne. My brother and I thought some of this cider, of the strength of which we had no idea, would prove a special treat, so we purloined a bottle. We had not been on the job very long before thirst overtook us, and we decided to broach the cider. It was good, and we emptied the bottle. Presently, however, a strange phenomenon occurred. Each one of us had become a twin. There were eight of us, and the berries were going to be gathered in quick time. But there was another strange happening. The fence was moving round in a circle, and we gazed at it in wonder. At last we rose unsteadily to our feet and tried to gather the berries as they passed along, but all we got was thorns, so we gave it up, and eventually went to sleep. When we awoke the afternoon was far advanced, and although we felt seedy we started to gather the berries as fast as we could, but as one of our number had to go home to milk cow's we returned with but half-filled baskets. We were a trembling quartette, apprehensive of coming trouble, when Mr Ivory cast his appraising eye over the fruits of our alleged day's labour. As we feared, his anger was aroused, and he denounced us as lazy good for nothings, who would not receive any financial recompense. We considered this a gross injustice, seeing that we had worked hard when we were able. Casting all our "Little Bethel" and Sunday school influences overboard, and forgetting the noble example of George Washington, who refrained from telling a whopper when he had used his hatchet on the cherry tree, We protested to high heaven that We had laboured with signal industry, but there had been a remarkable failure in the berry crop at Mr Pentecost's. If he would give us another chance we knew where there was a good crop (still

Mr Pentecost's). Somehow, however, our story did not ring true, and we became much alarmed when Mr Ivory put his saddle on his old grey mare and rode off in the direction of Mr Pentecost's farm. In all too short a time he returned, and we were not long in learning that our hopes of further employment were vain. Our lack of veracity was duly reported to our parents, and retribution was meted out to my brother and me with dad's willow wand in such a masterly way that a local anaesthetic would have been above the value of rubies. Fortunately for us the cider and its dire effects did not come into question, otherwise dad's oft-repeated threat to skin us alive might have been put into execution.

### Part XXIII. Smoking Strictly Prohibited.

THE smoking habit amongst the 4 youth of the present day had no counterpart in the mid-Victorian era. In my young days the cigarette was almost unknown, cigars and tobacco, chiefly the strong black known as niggerhead, being the customary smoke. A youth in his 'teens caught smoking tobacco in any form was regarded as little short of a criminal. As boys we looked upon smoking as a man's prerogative, and in a manly spirit we practised for the days to come by puffing away with a piece of cane which sometimes left a very sore tongue, or with a clay pipe charged with dry tealeaves.

An incident that happened at Merton's school in the late sixties well illustrates the feeling that existed in those days regarding smoking by lads. The school stood at the corner of what is now Victoria and Brook Street, and close by was a wooden bridge spanning Northbrook Creek. Under the bridge on both sides of the stream there was space to sit along the banks, and it was a favourite resort of the schoolboys in summer time. One evening a man crossing the bridge saw smoke coming from between the planks, and concluding that there must be fire below, he proceeded to investigate. What he discovered was seven or eight of the school boarders, whose ages ranged from 16 to 19 years, having a surreptitious smoke with cigars and pipes. This was a very serious matter, in fact an extremely shocking thing, and it had to be reported to Mr Merton without delay. It was a situation far beyond Mr Merton and his cane to deal with, and the ecclesiastical services of the Ven. Archdeacon Dudley had to be invoked. It was a matter of urgency, consequently the Archdeacon arrived at the school next morning when the boarders were at breakfast. A few of the day boys, myself amongst the number, who were early birds to capture the proverbial worm, in the shape of an uninterrupted use of apparatus provided for amusement, got wind of the trouble, and we took up our stand at the open dining-room windows to see what was going to happen. The Archdeacon gave an address he had prepared on the evils of smoking by youths, and the shocking depravity the boys had displayed in hiding under the bridge to conceal their sinful act. The boys were then commanded to kneel down and the Archdeacon delivered a special prayer he had composed, calculated to exorcise the evil spirit of smoking which had taken possession of the youth caught flagrante delicto. I am afraid, however, it fell very short of the desired effect, for the culprits, who as they knelt were facing us at the windows, had

their thumbs at their noses and fingers spread out in the age-old sign of contempt and derision. No doubt Mr Merton's cane would have made a more lasting impression.

Why I Don't Smoke. I don't smoke, and I have often wondered how many offers of cigarettes I have had to reject in my lifetime for that reason. The most incongruous Christmas present I ever received was a box of fifty cigars. I solved a knotty problem as to the best use I could make of the gift by passing it on to Rannerdale. It was not the frightful example of the school boys who fell so sadly from grace that influenced me to be a non-smoker. It was a personal experience with a far more serious consequence than suffered by them. The story is a rather long one, but it may serve as a warning to boys, and girls too, of the danger there is in tobacco. Including, girls in the warning reminds me that a woman smoker in the early days was a rare avis. Aunt Matilda used to smoke, but it was on the advice of her doctor, for the benefit of her heart, but whether as a stimulant to or soother of that organ, I can't say. Perhaps it had the double action.

A Perfect Sun Bath. If it had not been for a huge cigar there would be no story to tell. Mr Blackett imported a new brand of cigars, and included for window advertising purposes there was one about a foot long with a diameter to correspond. After having been displayed in the window for some time it was thrown into the street, and I picked it up. It was a prize indeed, and my brother and I with two specially favoured companions arranged to meet on the following Saturday afternoon to smoke it. It was summer time, and on the Saturday morning the weather, being excessively hot, we decided to have a-bathe. The bathing pool used by Merton's School boys was a short length of Northbrook Creek running through the Church of England Glebe land. There were some deep holes in the pool, dangerous to those who could not swim, and for that reason we were forbidden to bathe there unless accompanied by an adult. Of course we disobeyed and went by ourselves. We had not been in the water very long before Mr Merton's eldest son Charles, who was his assistant in the school, hove in sight, and scrambling out of the water we hid ourselves in some rushes. There was no bridge to cross the stream, so our enemy, for as such we regarded him, sat down by our clothes. Time went on, and as the rushes gave us no protection from the sun, we roasted. At last the dinner hour arrived, and Charles, becoming hungry I suppose, left for home. When we came out of our hiding place we were frightfully sunburnt and in a most uncomfortable condition. I have included our bathing adventure in the story because it has an important sequel. Before engaging in our great adventure my brother and I had our Saturday's duties to perform—to wit, cleaning the Sabbath boots, also the knives, forks, and spoons, and mum's special treasures, her brass candlesticks. These had to be polished until we could see our faces grotesquely reflected in their brightness. We did our work with such unusual industry and dispatch that mum's suspicion was aroused, and she made a specially careful inspection of the candlesticks, and of the steel forks of the period, to see that we had given proper attention to the spaces between the prongs. But we had expected this, consequently we had performed our work with special care to prevent delay in our subsequent

proceedings. Although our work was passed with first-class honours, mum still had her suspicions, and demanded to know our afternoon's programme. We told her that we were going with Ted, one of our companions, who had been in the town earlier in the day to get a new straw hat, and had to return one of two he had brought home for inspection. This was quite true, but not all the truth. Finally mum admonished us not to go bathing and get drowned. We readily assured her that we would respect her prohibition order, our backs and whatnots being too hot and sore to repeat our morning's disobedience.

Smoking the Cigar. Following out our arrangements for the great experience of smoking our first cigar, which, although some of us was above the age of thirteen and I was not more than eleven, was to initiate us into the status of manhood, we met at 2.30 p.m. in a ditch bounding Mrs Fuller's land, in what is now Ivory Street almost opposite to where Mr Halfacre is now living, which in the early days was an orchard. In fact it was the first orchard planted in the Rangiora settlement, being the work of Mr W. E. Ivory in 1856. The orchard was owned by Mr C. O. Torlesse, and it contained trees imported from Australia, amongst them being a plum tree which in our boyhood yielded us much fruit, in contravention of the Eighth Commandment. This tree is still in Mr Halfacre's orchard, a living witness to the sins of youth, and for old acquaintance sake I photographed it about a fortnight since. But to return to the ditch: I produced the precious cigar, and after it had been duly inspected and admired we drew up rules and regulations to govern our smoking, one being that each was to have six draws at the cigar and then pass it on. Another was that the draws were to be of a moderate character, not of excessive length. The initiation ceremony then commenced, and I, being the nominal owner of the cigar, had the privilege of the first six draws. The cigar end was a complete mouthful, and when it got properly warmed up the smoke came through in such volume as to resemble a small flue at work. After the end of round number two, it was unanimously agreed that only live draws each would be necessary to efficiently complete the initiation ceremony; and that the rule limiting the length of the draws should be expunged from our minds as being no longer required. Presently, by further amendment, the draws were unanimously reduced to four; and by this time our faces were beginning to lose their healthy colour, and our stomachs seemed to be setting up an objection to the smoke. Then our surroundings commenced to act queerly, inasmuch as the hedges were showing an inclination to waltz round in a circle. Much of the cigar was still unconsumed, but in view of the strange happenings it was deemed desirable to declare an interval of a few minutes to consider the situation. A test proved that we had difficulty in controlling our legs, and it then dawned upon us that the cigar must have contained poison. Probably it had been poisoned in the shop to prevent rats from nibbling it. We were now feeling very ill indeed, and there seemed nothing we could do but crawl into the orchard and die under our favourite plum tree. But before we commenced our last journey our dinners insistently urged us to give them attention. They had been perfectly good dinners, but we reasoned that they were of no further use to us, and the best of friends must part. So we reverently bowed our heads, crossed our hands tightly below our hearts, and with groans and a symphony of other sounds to be likened only to wireless

croonings (now so often inflicted upon us), and which might have been a new and original rendering of Auld Lang Syne, we laid them to rest in the quiet haven of the ditch beside the remainder of the cigar.

The Last Journey. Now with our troublesome cargoes jettisoned we commenced to crawl, as the best means of locomotion, towards our last goal. The situation of our first objective, the hole in the quick fence which we had used many times under happier circumstances, required us to take an oblique course across the road. After some wanderings we reached the fence, but now there was trouble. The hole proved very illusive, and we gathered sundry pricks and scratches before we could intercept it in its erratic circular movement. By following each other closely we at last safely negotiated it, and then blind instinct led us to our plum tree. I should have told before this that Ted through all his trouble had shown an affectionate regard for the parcel containing the hat he was scheduled to return to Good's emporium, and when he reached journey's end he had a firm grip of it. Now we had come to the end of our young lives, and were feeling so bad that we were looking upon our passing as a happy release. Certainly they had been very full lives. At the Little Bethel we had many times heard Pastor Ivory propounding the Calvinistic doctrine of preordination and election. At times, when in caucus, we had with a glimmering of the subject questioned how we were to know in what direction preordination was to take us. Somehow it seemed that our qualifications were as a finger post pointing downwards. But with our minds clouded with cigar smoke we were past these considerations now, and had to take our chances. With a final affectionate survey of our plum tree we composed ourselves under its shade and became dead to the world.

The Awakening. Time passed on, in fact a lot of time, and it was just when the sun was taking a last look round before sinking below the horizon, that an amazing tiling occurred. We all came to life. We looked at each other and stared around. Yes, we must be in this world, for there was our old friend the plum tree. Ted's eyes were directed to his precious parcel. Somehow it did not seem quite in shape. Opening its paper covering, he drew out the hat. To our horror it was no longer a hat. It was a pancake. Ted in his anxiety to preserve it from harm had made his bed on it. We were a quartette of miserable individuals. We could see no loophole of escape from our desperate position. It was now eight o'clock, and Ted should have been home at five o'clock to milk several cows. No doubt we were to have a practical illustration of preordination and election, for we were sure that by this time our parents had ordained and elected for each of us one of the soundest thrashings we had ever experienced. There would be no fatted calf killed for us, in fact we were apprehensive regarding our teas, being by this time desperately hungry. Ted, with his hat destined to become a derelict, was in the worst plight. Straw hats were expensive in those days. He felt sure that he would be deprived of the crowning glory of a new summer hat he had expected to sport on the morrow, for the one selected would inevitably have to replace the damaged one. What were we to do? It was one of the most serious problems of our lives. We had been in several bad jams, but had escaped, sometimes only, tis it were, by the

skin of our teeth. Our minds had been fagged with the cigar smoke, and our inventive faculties failed to function.

A Noble Resolve or Hobson's Choice? At last we decided that truth must prevail and thus solve our problem. It would be an experiment worth the trial. George Washington failed us in our trouble over the berry picking episode, but we would now give his example a trial. It was a mountainous wave of the brain. We had viewed the damage to Ted's hat as a terrible catastrophe. But it would be his salvation. Now we had cause to envy him. Did not Washington senior with tears in his eyes fall upon the neck of his noble son and exclaim, "George, my boy, I would rather have twenty cherry trees chopped to death with your little hatchet than I would have my son tell a lie." Would not Ted's father, when his son stood before him and with noble mien truthfully recited to its lowest depth the commission of his sin, fall upon his neck and declare that he would, rather have ten hats rolled as flat as pancakes than he would have his son tell a lie, even a white one. The number of hats was assessed at ten to be on the safe side. Washington senior seemed to have gone somewhat beyond the limit with his trees. There was another aspect of the decision to accept Hobson's choice. Would not our praiseworthy conduct be reported to the Pastor of the Little Bethel, who would so incorporate it with his sermon for the morrow without, it would be hoped, unduly increasing its length, that our misdeeds of the past would be forgotten and I would be released from my seat on the penitent form near the pastor's right hand, of which I had been the unrepentant occupant for many moons past. This would indeed be an outstanding triumph for truth. Our decision made and confirmed, with heads held high, and whistling to keep up our courage, he trod the new-made path of virtue to our homes.

But what had been going on at home? A great deal, a very great deal. We had caused a sensation indeed. It was a remarkable case of mysterious disappearance. Even the cows waiting to be milked lowed their concern. By 6 p.m. the neighbourhood had been apprised of our failure to come home, and scouts were sent out to discover our whereabouts. It was the general opinion that some mischief had brought us to grief and we were afraid to come home. The swimming pool where we had disported ourselves in the morning was early inspected, with the expectation of finding one or two drowned and the others too frightened to return home. The Police Sergeant's detective experience was commandeered, to no purpose. Ted's parents were sure that he had not run away from home, for was he not the proud possessor of a new straw hat to wear on the morrow?

The Home-coming. Excitement had run high and the immediate neighbourhood was in a ferment when through the dusk of evening we hove in sight. Somehow our heads were not as high as when we started, and we walked with slow and apprehensive step. Ted was bearing his unfortunate hat like a shield, but evidently having grave doubts as to its efficacy as a means of defence from retribution meted out by a wrathful parent. By all accounts his father failed to carry out his part of the programme. He hadn't rehearsed it, and instead of falling upon the prodigal's neck, he missed it and, grabbing



his collar, fell upon him with a stick. His chastisement was thorough, being divided like a sermon into three headings, firstly for smoking, secondly for sleeping on the hat, and finally for neglecting the cows. The homecoming of my brother and I was equally depressing, and our punishment more severe for speaking the truth than it was for prevaricating over the berries. Our story was not impressive, but dad's willow wand was. He worked overtime with it, and laid on to our backs and what-nots, already sore from the sun's attention, so that we howled for mercy loud enough to announce to the neighbourhood that we were home and were having a warm reception.

A Sequel and Silver Lining. Our untoward adventure had its sequel for my brother and me. It was our bath night, and we were in the kitchen. Our bath tub was the half of a large barrel, and we were engaged on our ablutions when mum peeped in to see that we were working well below the collar line. She caught sight of our backs, glowing red from the sunburn, and rushing in, almost screamed: "Oh, you poor boys, your father has often threatened to skin you alive, and he has done it this time. Your backs are like raw beef. I'll give him a piece of my mind when he comes home." We thought it was an occasion when a piece was not enough, but we sobbed our approval. We were careful not to display our legs, which were also glowing, and might have given us away. Dad had gone into the town to get the Sunday bottle of ale, and when we went to bed we kept awake, which was not difficult seeing how sore we were, to hear him get his deserts. He was not far through the door before the lioness spoke for her cubs. Dad got the wiggling of his married life; and with sundry moans and sobs we supported mum in her denunciation of his cruelty. She charged him with skinning us alive, our poor backs being bruised and red as beef, and she prohibited him from ever thrashing us again, otherwise she would hand him over to the Sergeant of Police. Dad was very penitent the next days, and remembering the prohibition order issued against him, we forgave him in view of future immunity from the use of his wand of correction. Never again did we have what dad described as a sound thrashing, consequently our cloud had a silver lining.

#### Part XXIV. (I) Ban on the Bishop's Pipe

THOSE acquainted with his Grace Archbishop Julius well know how much he enjoys his pipe, but all are not aware of the fact of a ban being placed on his smoking when on a visit to Rangiora soon after he came to the diocese. Before giving the story as related by his Grace I must explain that the Ven. Archdeacon Dudley was twice married. His first wife, who by her amiable disposition won the affection of the people of the parish irrespective of denomination, lived only five years after coming to Rangiora, her death taking place in 1865. The Archdeacon made another excursion into the realms of matrimony, his choice this time falling on a lady who had some estimable qualities, but she also had a will of her own, which she exercised at times in a manner embarrassing to the Archdeacon. For example, Merton's School being under the authority of the Church of England, it was the duty of the Archdeacon to make an oral Scripture examination once a year. Mrs Dudley insisted on taking a part in this. It was her custom, I recollect, to seat herself

on the platform, supported by two other ladies as a rule, and closely follow the Archdeacon's questions and the pupils' answers. Often when he passed over an answer as not being of sufficient merit to warrant the boy being advanced in the class to the top, Mrs Dudley would interpose: "Archdeacon, that boy answered the question very nicely; you must put him up." If the Archdeacon hesitated she would order the boy to go to the top of the class. One of her favourites was George, whom I mentioned in my sketch of the Archdeacon as having used bullock-punchers' language to the old grey mare. Mrs Dudley would say: "Go up, Georgie; that's a good boy," but George hated thus being singled out, and he vented his feelings with maledictions on the lady's head in adjectival language even worse than he used to the old mare.

But now for the Archbishop's story: Having to stay overnight in Rangiora, he was the guest of Archdeacon and Mrs Dudley at Earnley. The hour of retirement arrived and Bishop (his then title), Julius remarked that he would have his bed-time pipe and turn in. But he had reckoned without Mrs Dudley. The good lady spoke up most emphatically: "You won't smoke here, Bishop. I don't allow anyone to smoke in my house. If you must have your bedtime pipe you will have to go outside. The night happened to be a bitterly cold one, with a south-wester and rain. "But," said the Archbishop, "I was determined to have my pipe, and I went outside as ordered and found shelter from the storm under some trees. I was smoking under anything but happy conditions when I heard a low and anxious voice inquiring "Are you there, Bishop?" It was the Archdeacon, and I replied, "Yes." "Slip in quietly," said the Archdeacon. "The old lady has gone upstairs to bed."

Dad's First and Last Smoke. Let me tell how Dad had his first and only smoke. He had been suffering with the toothache, and dreaded a visit to Cornelius Bourke, the chemist and tooth extractor, with his formidable implements of torture. After enduring the pain for a while he came home one evening looking much happier than he had done for some days. He informed us that he had been told of a certain cure for his toothache, and he was going to try it. The remedy was to smoke a pipe of tobacco. "Smoke!" exclaimed Mum. "You will do nothing of the kind. It is bad enough having Aunt Matilda and others filling the house with their smoke when they come here, without you starting the stinking habit." Dad asserted his right as head of the house to do what he pleased. He was not going to Bourke to have his jaw broken. Finally Mum agreed to let him have one smoke and no more. It was a winter evening, and after tea Dad produced a clay pipe and a stick of the strong black twist tobacco. My brother and I, small boys at the time, were greatly excited. Dad was going to be a man like other men who smoked. It was to us an epoch event in the family history. We eagerly watched Dad cut up some tobacco, and rub it in his hands like we had seen Aunt Matilda and others do, and then fill his pipe. It was a tense moment when he struck the match, and got the pipe going. After he had been puffing out the smoke like an old hand for some time, and trying to direct the best part of it up the chimney, he began to lose interest in the operation and to look queer. Suddenly he jumped up from his chair and made a hurried exit to the open air. "What has Dad run away for?" we wonderingly inquired. "I expect he has gone to pull out his tooth," said Mum

with a smile. Not knowing just how the smoking was to cure the toothache, and hearing some queer noises outside, my brother and I concluded that he was wrestling with the tooth. Presently he returned, and no sooner did he appear than we excitedly cried, "Have you got the tooth out yet, Dad; let us see it." Dad made some gruff reply, and picking up the pipe and tobacco he stowed them away on a high shelf. "Aren't you going to smoke again?" we anxiously inquired. "No," said Dad, "the tobacco must be bad; it's poisonous." Mother smiled in the sure knowledge that she would not have cause to repeat her prohibition order; Cornelius earned a fee, and the tobacco was eventually used to make a wash to kill the fleas on our dog.

The Gang as Public Benefactors. Those of us who participated in the cigar-smoking episode trod a very sober path for a few weeks, as befitting the contrite spirit we were expected to exhibit. "When my brother and I took our next weekly bath the skin was peeling off our backs, thus presenting ocular proof to Mum that Dad had skinned us alive all right. The other members of our gang, when they heard of the cigar and the painful results of our smoke, expressed no sympathy with us, but the reverse. It served us jolly well right for being cigar hogs, they declared. If they had been invited to the smoke meeting we would have made fewer attacks on the cigar, and suffered less. We all remained quiet for a time, until one evening we staged a little session, just to let people know we had not disbanded. It is claimed that a hearty laugh does one good. If this is true we were benefactors to a large number of townspeople on the evening in question. In his cider-making days Dad constructed a box truck to collect apples. This my brother and I smuggled into the town to our meeting place at the east end of what is now High Street. There we were joined by other members of the gang and several girls. Two of the stoutest of the girls, and altogether very fine specimens of pioneer youth, accepted our invitation to a ride in the truck. They seated themselves back to back, and just as We Were about to start- we pushed them down into the truck, where they were wedged so tight that without help they were unable to extricate themselves. There we had them with their stout legs in the air, modestly encased in the long white pantalets (feminine gender of pantaloons) of the mid-Victorian period, finished off near the ankle with a tasteful frill. It was an exhibition calculated to make Mrs Grundy Weep. With a boy in the shafts of the truck and several others of the gang hauling with a rope, off We started at top speed through the town, we yelling and the girls screaming, at the same time waving S.O.S. signals with their befrilled legs in the evening sunshine. Out rushed customers and attendants from the shops, and even the toppers in the refreshment establishments left their anchorages and deserted their beer, and in a few minutes there Was a gale of laughter the Whole length of the business portion of the town, which I believe Will ever remain unparalleled in the history of the place. We burned at the post office and made for our starting place, the people still being in the street enjoying the fun. If they didn't feel refreshed in body and spirit that night it was not our fault.

A Crowning Escapade. The gang's crowning escapade took place when the railway was being constructed between Southbrook and Rangiora. It was one

that would have had a sequel in the Magistrate's Court if we had been found out, and I am wondering whether I am quite safe now if my part in the misdeed is made known. I may also place my commission as a J.P. in jeopardy. However, I will take a chance, and release the story for publication, otherwise it would be a loss to history.

The metals of the line had been laid as far as the steep incline approaching the High Street crossing, but the ballasting had not been done beyond a short distance from Southbrook. The navvies' camp was at Southbrook, and we took advantage of this to have some short rides on a small trolley in the evenings. On the evening of our exploit two long rakes of low trucks laden with the iron rails to complete the line to the Rangiora Station had been drawn up by horses and left on the before-mentioned incline and secured with wood chocks driven under the wheels. When we gathered at the line for our evening ride we found that the navvies, no doubt with a suspicion of our doings, had placed the trolley we used on the line between the front end of one of the rakes of trucks and the rear end of the other, with little space to move it. After a consultation over the situation we decided to endeavour to move the lower trucks with their load a little further down the line to give room for our run. There were several crowbars handy, and with these we set to work to knock the chocks from under the wheels. It didn't take us long to accomplish this, but it took much less time for us to wish we hadn't done so. When the last chocks were displaced the trucks started to move and that very rapidly. To our dismay they ran away. So did we, as fast as our legs could carry us, in various and devious directions, to avoid suspicion. As the trucks bumped along the unballasted line their loads of rails set up a clatter that was heard for a long distance. My brother and I had only a field to cross to reach the road now known as Ivory Street, near the lower end of which was our home. We found Dad in the road, cocking his ears to the sound of the runaway trucks, which by now had reached Southbrook. Diplomatically we got in the first word by inquiring with an air of perfect innocence if he had heard a strange sound over by the railway line. Yes, he had heard it, and he correctly diagnosed it as runaway trucks. We agreed with him, and also with his opinion that the navvies would get into trouble for not properly securing the trucks. We also thought it would serve them right. It was their fault for putting the trolley where we couldn't get at it. Meanwhile the trucks were still going strong on the smoother line below Southbrook, but gradually slowed down where the railway became level, and finally came to a standstill near the bridge over the north branch of the Waimakariri. The men in camps at Southbrook heard the trucks coming, but were helpless to stop them. Examination of the chocks next morning made it clear that they had been forced out, and the Police Sergeant had a busy time exercising his detective faculties, but all to no purpose. Of course, all of us responsible for the affair were uneasy in our minds for a few days, but when we found that suspicion did not point to us we became happy again. Some six years ago I attended the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Oxford town hall. I was having a chat with Mr August Meyers, chairman of the County Council, who in the early days lived at Southbrook. Incidentally he mentioned that when a boy 15 years of age he earned his first wages working on the construction of the railway between Southbrook and Rangiora. I asked him if

he recollected some trucks having run away. Rather! he replied, for it took the navvies the best part of the night to gather up rails that had fallen from the trucks and get the whole back to Rangiora. The trucks had been deliberately started, he added, but by whom was never discovered. When I told him that I was one of the culprits, and the only one still alive, he was amazed that after over 52 years he should have the mystery of the runaway trucks cleared up, and that an ex-Mayor and J.P. could make such a confession of mischief.

This escapade, as far as I recollect, ended the career of the gang. Most of the boys went to work, and probably this had a steadying influence. I don't wish to leave the impression that we were a bad lot. In our frolics we but proved the truth of the adage, "Boys will be boys," and we simply enjoyed life to the full. I was no better than my companions, and yet when the gang was at its zenith I was awarded a special prize at school given by the Board of Education for diligence and good conduct. I must admit, however, that I set little value on the prize, for the reason that I could not satisfy myself that I altogether deserved it. I may add that when we entered upon the more serious phase of life we all made good, and now there are only two of us left this side of the great divide to ponder over the past.

#### PART XXIV (II) Trek of a Pioneer Family.

THE following interesting account of the trek of the Gulliver family from Lyttelton to Rangiora in March 1858 was supplied to me by the late Mr F. Gulliver-Cradwick, whose father (Mr James Gulliver) was the first baker to establish business in Rangiora. The narrator dated his story from the time the family left England on November 5, 1857, in the good ship Roehampton of 500 tons. To continue in his own words: We arrived in Lyttelton on March 8, 1858, the voyage occupying over four months. On the way out we called at the Cape of Good Hope to take in ballast, and this lengthened the time of the voyage somewhat. While at Capetown the captain of the ship (Captain Chandler) selected three boys to have the privilege of going ashore for a day, and I was one of the lucky three, the other two being Mr F. Horrell, of Rangiora, and Major F. Sanford, who was well known in Christchurch. Curiously enough, we all answered to the name of "Frederick."

Over the Hills on a Donkey. My earliest recollections of the new country were leaving Lyttelton at the end of March and walking over the bridle path to near where the Heathcote railway station now stands. My two younger brothers, Harry and George, rode over in baskets slung across the back of a donkey. I remember how I envied them their ride, and tried in vain to change places with them. On arrival at Heathcote we boys, were delighted to find a bullock dray awaiting us, and with our household goods, which had come round from Lyttelton in the paddle steamer Novelty, packed on it, we started on the first stage of our journey, Rangiora being our objective. There were no formed roads, and it can be imagined how we bumped along the track to Christchurch. We found the site of the present city mostly swamp and niggerheads, there being, I recollect, a large boghole opposite the White Hart

Hotel. At Christchurch we camped for the night under the dray, which had a large tarpaulin thrown over it.

Crossing the Styx. The next morning we started on the second stage of our journey, coming at length to the River Styx, but some distance west from where the present bridge on the North Road is situated, having to make a number of detours to avoid swampy places. The banks of the stream were very soft, and we had to gather a lot of flax-sticks and tie them in bundles to lay on the banks in order to make a crossing. I may mention that the practice of crossing on bundles of flax-sticks was the origin of the present name Styx, and not to any fancied resemblance to Dante's famous stream of that name. As far as I am aware, the river had not been named when we crossed it.

Fording the Waimakariri. Having successfully negotiated the stream, it was now towards evening, and we again made our camp for the night under the dray. The next day the going was much better, the country being dry and stony. Late in the afternoon we arrived on the bank of the Waimakariri, and camped again a good way up-stream from where the Empire bridge crosses the river. The next day was spent in hunting for a ford, there being several streams running over the riverbed. Fortunately the river was low, and we made a safe crossing, but we had to make several trips across, taking a portion of our belongings each trip. The fording of the river occupied us the whole day, and we made our fourth camp on the north bank. On the fifth day we managed to reach the neighbourhood of what is now Swannanoa, which we made our next camping place. Arrival at Rangiora Late in the following day we reached Rangiora, ending our journey at Mr C. O. Torlesse's house, the first dwelling erected in the district, occupying a site in front of the bush near what is now the junction of King Street and John Street. Six days oil the journey from Lyttelton to Rangiora! Think of it, you who now cover the distance from Christchurch in about half an hour.

Mr Torlesse had a stable which he very kindly cleared out for us to live in, and it can be imagined how we felt to have a roof over our heads once more. There was of course no fireplace, and all our cooking was done in the open air. In the evening the embers of our fire were put into our camp oven, and taken into the stable, and very warm it made the place. We lived in the stable for some months while my father was having a look round. Eventually he bought a half-acre section in what is now High Street, paying £2/10/- for it. Fancy buying half an acre in the centre of Rangiora for that sum! I may note that I have the original deed still in my possession.

Building a Sod House. There was then not even a track along what is now High Street, and only a few houses in the whole of the area now comprising the borough. My father set to work and built a sod house, with a thatched roof, on the site of the shop afterwards occupied by my youngest brother, Herbert J. Gulliver. When we got settled in our new house things were very much better. My father's sister, who accompanied us from England, started a school in the building afterwards used for the school conducted by the late Mr Chas. Merton, and which became the most important scholastic

institution in Canterbury outside of Christchurch. I pride myself that I was one of Mr Merton's first pupils. My aunt afterwards went to Springbank as governess to Mr Robert Chapman's family. By degrees other settlers came to Rangiora and we became more civilised, but owing to the fact that the land around was sold in twenty and fifty acre blocks the place was for a long time a village of one street only. This little sketch, the narrator concluded, would give the young people of the present day an idea of what the pioneers had to go through in making their homes in the new land before the country was roaded and the rivers bridged.

## Part XXV. CRICKET IN PIONEER TIMES

THE national game of cricket was the chief recreation in the early days, the game being played from the time there was a patch of ground clear on which to erect the wickets. Mr Leech noted in his diary of 1854 that his brother and his farm hand went into Rangiora and found the settlement keeping holiday on account of Mr C. O. Torlesse's wedding, and they stayed and played cricket. Amongst the early settlers there were several county and university players from the Home Land, and a very good team could be put in the field in the early 'sixties. I recollect that one of the playing grounds was on what is now the East Belt, the land now being in the possession of Mr Thomson and others. The bowling at first was all underarm, round arm eventually being introduced by a newcomer from England. Matches were played against Christchurch teams, and usually attracted a considerable number of spectators, who took keen interest in the games. Although the "Lyttelton Times" was a small paper in those days, a good deal of space was devoted to reports of the matches. In addition to the senior club, in the 'seventies there was a flourishing junior club which also occasionally tried conclusions with youthful teams from Christchurch. At one time, I believe, there was a third club in existence, known as "The Apprentices Club." Football was only a schools game, both Rugby and Association being played until early in the 'eighties the North Canterbury Club was formed and for some years had a flourishing career, most of the first fifteen being brilliant players, from amongst whom, several were usually selected to represent Canterbury in provincial matches'. It was also the most largely represented Club in the first All Black team to visit Great Britain. Hockey is supposed by many people to be a comparatively modern game, but such is not the case. We played it at Merton's School but used a small square block of wood instead of a ball. Our sticks were mostly of gorge with a crook at the end. A good, stick of the right shape was looked upon as a treasure. Our playground was the Drain Road opposite the school.

The Initial Sports Gathering. For many years Rangiora was famed in the sports world for its New Year's Day sports meeting. This annual gathering, organised on New Year's Day, 1860, when Mr C. O. Torlesse invited all the inhabitants of the settlement to his place for a sports party. As can be supposed, they turned up in full force, and thoroughly enjoyed a programme which included many Old Country events, one of the most amusing being grinning through a horsecollar, the prize going to the competitor who succeeded in making the ugliest grimaces. Amongst the refreshments

provided was a hogshead of beer, and the menfolk continued the gathering well into the night in a very convivial manner. One of those present told me that he and a few others woke up next morning to find themselves lying around the beer barrel. It was at the evening party that Mr John Lilley for the first time in the new land sang his famous folk song, entitled "Jack Rag." Ever after that he was called upon to sing this, his only song, at every convivial gathering he attended. Mr Torlesse's party was so much enjoyed that it was decided to make it an annual event, and for over fifty years with one or two breaks the sports were held. At first they were managed by a committee, and afterwards by the "Athletic Association," until the war put an end to its activities. The programmes of later days attracted champions in cycling and other events from parts as far distant as Australia.

A Drastic Remedy. Ivory Street was known as Ivory's Road before the Borough was established, and in the 'sixties and even later it was much in its native state. There was a good deal of flax growing on it, through which there was but a dray track. Towards the town end there were three large and deep spring holes, rendering it dangerous to traverse it at night without a lantern. The water discharged from the springs found its way down the west side of the road, forming a creek carrying a considerable flow. In an early sketch I stated that my father's first land purchase was what is now the Bank of New Zealand corner, but in 1861 he sold the section to Mr C. Bourke. His next selection was near the lower end of Ivory's Road, on which there was a one-roomed cob whare. This stood close to the road, and the creek ran past the foot of the chimney. Here we dwelt for over a year before my father built a house. It was during our occupation of the whare that my mother had an unenviable experience. An Irish family lived in a V-shaped hut a short distance below our place, and the man at times over-indulged in liquor. One day my mother was engaged ironing her weekly wash, and unknown to her, the chimney caught fire. The chimney was a low one and there happened to be a ladder leaning against it. The Irishman was passing and, noticing the fire, he seized a bucket handy, filled it with water from the creek, and although "under the influence" he managed to mount the ladder and pour the bucket of water down the chimney, without giving my mother warning. In front of the fire there was a quantity of linen airing, and its condition after the water struck the fire can be better imagined than described. Of course my mother suffered a severe shock, but afterwards regarded it as but another pioneering experience.

The First Trout. On our section there was a very large spring, being the head of the creek which flows in an easterly direction past Burton Brewery, and discharges into the Northbrook Stream. My father constructed a swimming bath, and although the water was intensely cold it was pretty largely patronised by Merton's schoolboys and others. He also used the strong flow from the spring to run a gristing mill as a side lino to his carpentry business. But it is of the trout we had in our pond I wish to write. In the year 1868 the Acclimatisation Society at Christchurch managed after one or two failures to introduce trout into the colony. Out of the first young fish they reared they gave my father ten, then little larger than whitebait, to liberate in his pond. The fish thrived, and when they were about five or six inches in length he



netted one, which my mother carefully cooked. It was then divided into four pieces, one for each member of the family, to enable us to claim that we had eaten the first trout reared in New Zealand. Several months afterwards, the committee, of the Acclimatisation Society dined together at one of the Christchurch hotels for the purpose of enjoying what they declared to be the first trout eaten in the colony. My father sent a few lines to the "Lyttelton Times" to undeceive them. Our trout grew to a large size and were a constant source of interest to visitors. We fed them until they became quite tame, but although my father prepared spawning beds for them they never increased. It was thought that the spring water was too cold to hatch the eggs. One of the trout grew to a large size, but it domineered the smaller fish so much that my father had to catch it. Mr J. Sinclair of the Junction Hotel had it mounted in a glass case, and it is still preserved in the Sinclair family. Eventually my father disposed of the property, but I don't know what became of the trout.

**Wrecking a Newspaper Office.** Some time in the late 'seventies Rangiora gained notoriety throughout the colony through the action of some of its well-known citizens. At the time there was a weekly rag of a paper published in Christchurch named "The Liberty." The paper was devoted principally to the publication of personal items, many of which were of a most objectionable character. The people running the paper found no difficulty in obtaining correspondents in different county centres, who raked the muck-heaps for news, and also caused a good deal of trouble to young people. For example, a girl might learn that her best boy had been seen out walking with some other maiden, when perhaps he had been only a few minutes in her company. At last the publication became intolerable to right thinking people as far as Rangiora was concerned, and when some specially objectionable remarks were made concerning some young women, four from the ranks of our leading business men made a solemn vow to wreak vengeance on the editor of the paper and all his staff. Proceeding to the city, they gained admission to the place where the paper was produced. It didn't take the editor long to scent a horse-whipping, and he fled, with all his staff, down a back stairs. The instruments of vengeance then set to work with right good will, and in a few minutes the type was scattered, in what is called a printer's pie, all over the floor, cases were broken up, and in fact the place was pretty badly wrecked. The four escaped before the police arrived on the scene, but they subsequently appeared before the Magistrate, who, however, treated them leniently, being of opinion, no doubt, that they had performed a good public service. It is almost needless to say that the paper never appeared again.

**An Historic Pig.** After my narrative of the great flood of 1868 appeared, Mrs H. I. Mehrtens of Coldstream told me an interesting little story in connexion with the visitation. Mrs Mehrtens's father was Mr Jonathan Brown, who in the early days had a farm on the Woodend road a short distance west of the Cam. At the height of the flood a heavy overflow from the Ashley covered the farm and amongst the debris the water brought down was a stack of grain. As the flood receded this settled near Mr Brown's house, and in it he discovered a large Berkshire sow. Three days afterwards the sow produced a family of ten. Inquiries as to the ownership of the pig instituted by Mr Brown and the police

proved fruitless. The mother and her progeny with a male Mr Brown purchased formed the foundation of a strain of Berkshires that brought fame to him as a breeder. As prize-winners at various shows during many years, and as bacon producers, Mr Brown's pigs were widely known. Year after year he was a first prize winner at shows for his home-made bacon and hams; and on one occasion he sent an exhibit to a show in Cumberland, his native county, for which he was awarded a first prize and a special of a silver cup which Mrs Mehrtens still has in her possession.

A Controversial Topic: .Should a Wife Hold a Job? One still finds a number of people strongly against the idea of the married woman holding down a job even for a year or so (writes Georgia Rivers in the women's section of the November "Australian Journal"), yet I know various strong "antis" who have changed their views considerably in the last few years. To quote an acquaintance of mine who five years ago strongly denounced the idea: "What sort of home-life is that for a man?" he exclaimed. "How can a maid, or even a housekeeper, create that air of comfort which a wife should achieve? Also, it's bad for the girl herself. Even the overseeing of an establishment is tiring when laid on top of a day's work in the city. Her health must suffer, and consequently her temper. Besides, what man likes to have it said of him that he cannot support his wife? And, most important of all, she is holding down a job which should go to a single girl or a man."

The other day I happened to broach the subject, and found that he had not only modified his views, but taken a right-about-turn attitude. Fine idea!" he smiled, when told of a young couple who were starting off on this basis. "It will be a great help to her husband until he is on his feet a bit more firmly. Much better than a dragged-out engagement, and really no more tiring for the girl, since, if she were home, or baching, she would probably have a good deal of housework to do. If she engages a good girl, she should be able to manage quite easily, and, after all, if she is holding down a job she does not absolutely need, she is also providing another for a domestic. She re-adjusts herself more naturally to her new life if she has good solid work to do during the day, and the majority of young brides will tell you that with everything as bright as a new pin they hardly know how to fill in their time during the first year of their marriage. And what young husband need feel it a disgrace to have a working wife when so many are at it?"

Pigeon Post Days. Homing pigeons played an important part in the rapid transmission of news to the Christchurch newspapers in years gone by. Telephones and telegraphs were then rarities, and the pigeon loft was an essential part of the newspaper organisations. My own experience in the use of the homer pigeons for carrying news to the "Lyttelton Times" extended over many years, Rangiora, my headquarters as representative »of the paper, being conveniently situated for a regular pigeongram service. It must be nearly fifty years since I first became acquainted with the despatching of news by pigeon in seeing Mr S. Saunders, the "Times" sporting writer (afterwards for many years editor of the paper) using the birds for the "Star" report of the races. At that time the pigeongram was written small on very thin paper, and this was

rolled up tightly and forced into a goode-quill, which was then attached to one or two of the bird's large tail feathers. By this means only very short despatches were carried. It was not till some years later that I occasionally made use of a pigeon, the loft at the offices being at the time very much neglected. Eventually, however, Mr A. C. Gerard, a prominent homing pigeon fancier employed in the Times staff, took charge, and soon had a fine lot of birds available for use. It was then that a regular pigeongram service was established between Rangiora and Christchurch. A bird, or two or three if required, was forwarded to me by train every evening, and at about 1.30 p.m. the next day I sent it away carrying any news I had gathered.

Developing the Pigeon Post. The late Mr J. Lowthian Wilson, of Kaiapoi, who was the chief representative of the "Press" in North Canterbury, also used pigeons daily, and in experimenting we so improved the carrying capacity of the birds that we could depend upon a single bird delivering at one time copy sufficient to fill up to one and a quarter columns of newspaper print. Of course we would never expect a bird to do this except in good flying weather. The copy was written on the lightest Japanese copying paper procurable, with a fine-pointed steel or agate stylus, or one of the hardest artists' pencils, and duplicated with carbon paper. Mr Wilson attached his despatch to the bird's leg, but I preferred to use one of the large tail feathers. In using the leg it was necessary to protect the dispatch with a very thin indiarubber covering, in case the bird should alight on its journey to take a drink, and get its feet in the water. In wet weather I protected my dispatches with a covering of thin waxed paper. I seldom went afield on reporting expeditions without a homer, and I have liberated birds at one time or another in every quarter of North Canterbury. On arrival at its loft a bird invariably made its way in for food and water, and in doing so trapped itself, and at the same time started an electric bell ringing in the office as a signal to be relieved of its dispatch.

Old Red. A bird that did me wonderfully good service was a red chequer cock known as "Old Red." He was indeed remarkably intelligent. I have already stated that when Mr Gerard took charge of the "Times" loft it was in a very bad state. It was infested with rats and lice, and while "Old Red's" mates made it their home, he gave it a wide berth, and slept out on one of the sheltered ledges of the building, going to the fields for food and water. There were ten pigeons including "Old Red," but nine of them were in such a bad state that they had to be destroyed, the old bird being the only one in a fit condition to save. When he saw Mr Gerard cleaning and preparing the loft he took quite an interest in the operation, and he and Mr Gerard were soon great pals. Mr Gerard introduced a mate for him from his own loft of racing pigeons, and also several well-bred young birds. "Old Red" was very tame. He would remain perfectly quiet when I was attaching a dispatch to his tail, but seemed to take a keen interest in what I was doing. Immediately he was satisfied the operation was completed he would show great anxiety to be away. On releasing him he did no circling to get his direction, but would be off at top speed for home. Victoria Street is almost in a direct line with the Christchurch Cathedral, and Old Red would follow the street every time he was released, and would home in about 20 minutes, the city being sixteen miles in an air line from Rangiora.

The Sagacity of Old Red. An incident in "Old Red's" career is worth recording, as being another clear proof of his intelligence. He came to me one evening as usual, and at 1 p.m. the next day I sent him away carrying some specially important news. To make doubly sure that the dispatch would reach the office in time for publication I forwarded a duplicate by the midday train. The news duly appeared in the "Star," but from a slight alteration I had made, I knew the train-conveyed copy had been used. At about noon the next day the proprietor of a shop semi-detached from my office informed me that one of my pigeons was on his counter. Going to investigate, I found "Old Red" standing on the counter, and he at once showed he was very pleased to see me. He allowed me to pick him up, and I discovered the dispatch still attached to his tail. He was very hungry, and after feeding him I rang up Mr Gerard, from whom I learnt that during the night "Old Red" was in Rangiora, a cat got into the loft and killed several birds. Evidently "Old Red" when he arrived home discovered that something alarming had occurred, and being afraid to enter the trap to announce his arrival, returned to Rangiora for safety and for food and water.

An Epic Flight. Another remarkable episode of the pigeon service must be recorded. It was in connexion With the Amberley murder, when a girl of sixteen was stabbed to death with a pocket knife on a road close to the township at about midday, in a most atrocious manner. The suspected murderer was taken into custody the same evening, and the inquest was held the next day. Four pigeons were sent me to convey my report of the proceedings. Just before the lunch adjournment the police sprang a surprise with a full confession by the murderer. This added to an already fairly heavy dispatch for a bird to carry the distance to Christchurch, making over a column of newspaper print. To make sure of delivery I had written my copy in triplicate, and I attached the .original to one bird and the duplicate .to another. Both birds went away shortly after 1 p.m. I had lunch, and then rang up the office to have a look-out kept for the birds' arrival. Much to my astonishment the reply I received was that one of the birds had homed. My dispatch was expected earlier, and great anxiety was felt at its non-arrival. The murder had horrified people so much that hundreds collected outside the office waiting for the publication of the "Star." But this is the remarkable point of the incident. Mr Gerard, through having to basket the birds by matchlight at 2 o'clock in the morning, included amongst the four an untrained youngster in mistake for its parent. Having concluded that I had used the young bird, which had never been away from the loft, and that the dispatch would be lost, it can easily be imagined that Mr Gerard was the most anxious and unhappy man in the office. It can also be realised that he felt great relief when the bell rang announcing that a bird had homed, but his amazement was great when he found that the first bird in was the youngster that had never before been away from home. The old well-trained bird sent away at the same time did not put in an appearance until several minutes later. On comparing the times of dispatch with the times of arrival it was found that the flight had been made in remarkable time. This wonderful performance of a young bird, carrying a heavy dispatch, was regarded by homer fanciers as an epic flight and a record not likely to be eclipsed.

Homers in Peril. The homers, when flying low, were always in danger of being shot, but as far as I recollect, only one pigeon met with a fate of this kind when on its way from Rangiora to the city. On the occasion referred to a bird I liberated failed to home, and being in thorough training Mr Gerard surmised that it had met with an untimely end. This was confirmed within a day or two by the engine-driver of the midday train from Rangiora, who reported that close to the Waimakariri he heard a gun-shot and saw what he believed to be a carrier pigeon fall. I knew that my bird must have been in the vicinity when the train crossed the river. On one occasion a bird on its way to me by evening train mysteriously disappeared. Next morning a fisherman early abroad on the Waimakariri found the pigeon box floating down the river, and in it our bird, none the worse for its adventure. Evidently it had been dropped from the train into the river, but by whom remained a mystery.

Good Work by the Birds. The late Right Hon. Richard Seddon was very interested in the "Times" birds, and on one occasion took a box of pigeons, and liberated them on the West Coast. All these birds successfully flew from the Coast several times with messages. A bird was liberated on one occasion at 12 noon at Greymouth, and the message appeared in the first edition of the "Star" shortly after 2 p.m. The birds were often lent to doctors visiting patients in out-of-the-away places.- They would bring back prescriptions, which were immediately delivered to the chemist concerned, who 'without delay forwarded the medicine to its destination, thus saving valuable time.

That the "Times" birds were of the right stuff was proved' when a bird bred at the loft won the race from Napier to Dunedin (550 miles) in 11 hours 4 minutes. There was also that grand performance from the Antarctic ship Nimrod, the bird doing 375 miles of sea journey.

Mr Gerard sent a bird to the Lees Valley when that settlement was snowed in in 1918. A contemporary, getting wind of this, sent a special reporter with two pigeons, and thus stole a march on the "Star." However, although the reporter got his two birds on the wing first, hawks accounted for both of them. The "Star" bird got through, arriving in the early evening announcing the success of the relief expedition, and that the settlers were found all safe and sound. The message was in time for the 8 o'clock "Star" on Saturday. Soon after the "Times" Company sold out to the N.Z. Newspapers Ltd it was decided that the pigeons were no longer required, and the loft was closed.

#### ADDENDUM

Cemeteries in Rangiora: Some Early Memories. (C. I. Jennings) (14/5/1937)

The cemetery question being just now such a burning one with the residents of our town and district, it is doubtless, a fitting time to recall the steps taken by the pioneers of the Rangiora settlement to provide burial grounds for the community. I noticed that a correspondent in a recent issue of the "Gazette" taxed the early settlers with lack of foresight in providing so many scattered burial plots around the settlement. The answer to this is that when it comes

to be considered that the land was in its rough native state, and the settlement a few scattered houses, it is easy to realise that the sites selected for the cemeteries could be considered to be well out of the radius of the business and residential area. It is to be remembered that Rangiora was so far off the main arterial road from Christchurch to the north, along which were the more populous centres of Kaiapoi and Leithfield, that it was hardly expected to rise to the importance it has now assumed. In the early days Leithfield, with a population of some 500, vied with Rangiora in importance as a business centre, and when the northern railway was projected there was a stern fight made at Leithfield and Woodend to get the line through those townships in preference to the Rangiora route. But this by the way—and to return to the subject of the establishment of our cemeteries. Included in the small band of pioneers who made Rangiora their home between the years 1854 and 1858 there was a party of relatives consisting of the Ivory, Stapleforth, Doggett, and Jennings families, all of whom were either uncles, aunts, or cousins, the elders being connected on the Ivory side. Messrs W. E. Ivory and W. Stapleforth arrived with their families in the ship *Cashmere* in 1855. Their home letters induced Messrs Aquila Ivory and D. Doggett to emigrate with their families in the ship *Glentanner* less than two years later, and Mr C. Jennings and family arrived at the end of 1857. It will be of interest to note that Mrs Rebecca Bradley, who has contributed so many interesting articles on incidents of the early days to the “*Gazette*,” was a member of the Doggett family, being, I believe, about nine years of age when she arrived in the colony, suffering from the effects of an accident.

**First Death.** Mr Doggett was in poor health when he took ship for the new land, and his death occurred three months after arrival, being primarily due to sunstroke. This was the first death in the settlement, and no portion of land having as yet been provided for a cemetery, Mr Doggett’s remains were temporarily interred in a corner of Mr Stapleforth’s land. The settlers then bestirred themselves to obtain a grant of land for a burial ground, and as the result of an application to the Provincial Council the site now known as the Anglican Church cemetery was obtained. Mr Doggett’s body was then exhumed, and was reinterred in the cemetery at the foot of a cabbage tree, which formed a landmark on the open face of the country. As an example of the rather casual way in which the settlers sometimes did things, one of those who assisted at the re-interment told me that by the time the coffin was lowered into the new-made grave it was five o’clock, so he and his companions, considering that the day’s work was finished, knocked off to return the next morning to do the filling in. In the same year (1857), very soon after Mr Doggett’s re-burial, another grave was opened at the foot of the cabbage tree to receive the remains of Mr W. E. Ivory’s wife, whose death and that of Mr Doggett left a great blank in the family group.

**Anglican Claim.** All the Ivory family, save one of those connected with it by marriage, belonged to the Baptist denomination of the Calvinistic type, and it was mainly through their efforts that the land was obtained for the cemetery, their need being the greater owing to Mr Doggett’s death. It was the expressed intention of the settlers that the cemetery should be a public one without any

connexion with different religious bodies. Imagine the feeling of indignation aroused when, on the arrival of the Rev. B. W. Dudley three years later to take charge of the Church of England parish, he objected to nonconformists, or as some called them, "dissenters," in what he claimed to be Church of England property. Proof of the claim was demanded, and on investigation it was found that, by some error on the part of the clerk who drew the instructions for the deed, the land had been vested in the Church of England quite contrary to the wishes of those in the settlement connected with that religious body. Mr Dudley, it is said,- offered to provide the other denominations with a section for their burial ground, but such was the bitter feeling that they refused to accept it. The adherents of the other denominations then set about providing their own cemeteries. The Presbyterian cemetery was the gift of Mr John McFarlane of Coldstream, one of whose sons, drowned in early childhood, was the first to be buried in it. The United Methodists acquired their cemetery, adjoining the Presbyterian, by gift from Mr Booth, father of Mr George Booth of Christchurch, and the Baptist burial ground on the north side of the Presbyterian was purchased by members of the chapel congregation. Each of the different allotments of an area of just over half an acre cost £10.

At a much later period the Wesleyan Methodists established themselves in the township with a church in Ashley Street, near what is now Horrell's garage, and they too acquired their own cemetery on the Ashley Road near the river, and the Roman Catholics elected to have their burial ground close to their church yard.

Neglected and Disowned. Regarding the Methodist cemetery on the East Belt: It appears that when the union of the Wesleyan and Methodist Churches took place no deed of the old cemetery could be found, and in consequence it was never taken over by the united church, hence there is no one responsible for its upkeep, and this accounts for its neglected condition. Seeing that some of the pioneers of Methodism in Rangiora are buried in the cemetery it seems a pity that some arrangement cannot be made to keep it in fair order.

Public Cemetery Referring to the provision of a public cemetery, it may be recalled that over 50 years ago the Borough Council recognised the wisdom of taking steps to that end, and communicated with Mr S. H. Andrews, who was an early settler in Rangiora, but who returned to England, with a view to the purchase of the 30 acres (now Maria Andrews Park) which he owned, to be dedicated as a public burial ground. However, Mr Andrews objected to selling the land for the purpose, but made it a gift to the Borough for a park on condition that it be named after his wife. Over twenty years ago another effort was made to obtain a public cemetery. The Borough Council sent a deputation to the Rangiora and Ashley County Councils seeking co-operation in the project, but the Rangiora Council was lukewarm in the matter, and the Ashley Council flatly refused to have anything to do with it, pointing out that the County had a cemetery reserve which the residents should use.

END.